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THE NOVELS

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

OF

VICTOR HUGO

E. Duez inv. Géry-Bichard sc.

The storehouse completed, Gilliatt constructed the forge.

—Toilers of the Sea, Vol. III., 65.

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The Buckner Library Edition

The Toilers of the Sea

by

Victor Hugo

WITH ETCHINGS

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BOOK FOUR

THE DOUBLE DEPTHS OF THE MYSTERY

I.

THE HUNGRY MAN IS NOT THE ONLY HUNGRY CREATURE

When he awakened he was hungry.

The sea was becoming calmer. But there was yet sufficient motion in the ocean to render immediate departure impossible. Moreover, the day was too far gone. In order to reach Guernsey before midnight with such a cargo as that carried by the sloop, it would be necessary to leave in the morning.

Although suffering from hunger, Gilliatt began to strip himself, which was his only means of getting warm.

His clothes were soaked by the storm, but the rain had washed out the sea-water, so that it was now possible for them to dry.

Gilliatt only wore his trousers, which he rolled up to his thighs.

Here and there, on the projections of the rocks around him, he spread out his shirt, his jacket, his coat, his leggings, and his sheepskin, fastening them down with stones.

Then he thought of eating.

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Gilliatt used his knife, which he had been very careful to sharpen and to keep always in good condition, and he detached from the rocks a few limpets, somewhat like the clams found in the Mediterranean. It is well known that these are eaten raw. But after such various and arduous exertion, this was a mere pittance. He had no more biscuit. As for water, there was no lack of that. He had more than enough; he was drenched.

He took advantage of the ebbing tide to wander among the rocks in search of crawfish. There were enough of them above the water to promise a successful find.

But he did not reflect that he no longer had the means of cooking anything. If he had taken the time to go to his storehouse, he would have found it inundated by the rain. His wood and coal were drenched, and of his stock of tow, which served him for tinder, there was not a particle which was not saturated. He had no means of lighting a fire.

Besides, the bellows was broken. The weather-board of the hearth of the forge was loosened; the storm had devastated the workshop. With the tools which had escaped uninjured Gilliatt might, in an emergency, work as a carpenter, but not as a blacksmith. However, at this moment he was not thinking of his workshop.

His attention was drawn in another direction by hunger, and without further reflection he went in pursuit of food. He did not wander about in the gorge of the rock, but outside among the breakers. It was there that the Durande, ten weeks before, had been dashed against the reefs.

For the search in which Gilliatt was engaged, the exterior of the defile was better than the interior. Crabs have the habit of crawling out of the water at low tide. They like to warm themselves in the sun. These unshapely creatures love the noonday. It is strange that they emerge from the water in broad daylight. Their crawling is well-nigh disgusting. When one sees them with their awkward sidelong gait, climbing clumsily from layer to layer of the lower strata of rocks, like the steps of a stairway, one is forced to acknowledge that the ocean has its vermin.

For two months Gilliatt had lived upon this vermin.

On this day, however, the crabs and crawfish hid themselves. The tempest had driven these lonely creatures back into their hiding-places, and they had not yet regained sufficient confidence to venture forth. Gilliatt held his open knife in his hand, and from time to time snatched a shell-fish from under the seaweed.

He ate while he walked.

He could not have been far from the spot where Sieur Clubin had been lost.

Just as he was making up his mind to be contented with sea-urchins and sea-chestnuts, there was a splashing at his feet. A large crab, frightened at his approach, had just dropped into the water. The crab did not go down in the water deep enough for Gilliatt to lose sight of him.

Gilliatt ran after the crab along the base of the rock. The crab fled.

Suddenly, it vanished.

It had just hidden in some crevice under the rock.

Gilliatt clung to the projections of the rock with his hands, and leaned his head forward, so that he could see under the overhanging cliff.

In fact, there was a crevice there, where the crab must have taken refuge.

It was more than a crevice. It was a sort of opening.

The sea flowed in through this opening, although the water there was not deep.

The bottom, strewn with stones, was visible. These stones were sea-green and clothed with conferva, which indicated that they were never dry. They resembled the tops of children's heads covered with green hair.

Gilliatt held his knife between his teeth,

descended the cliff by means of his hands and feet, and jumped into the water. It came almost up to his shoulders.

He passed under this ledge, and found himself in a much-worn corridor with a roof of an ogive vault over his head. The walls were smooth and polished. The crab had disappeared. He kept his footing, and, advancing through the diminishing light, began to be unable to distinguish objects.

After he had taken about fifteen steps, the arch above him ended. He was beyond the corridor. Now there was more space, and consequently more light; besides, the pupils of his eyes were dilated, and he saw quite distinctly. A surprise awaited him.

He had just re-entered that strange cave which he had visited the month previous.

But this time he entered it from the sea.

The submerged arch, which he had formerly seen, was the one through which he had just passed. It was accessible at certain low tides.

His eyes became accustomed to the darkness. He was able to see more and more distinctly. He was astonished. He had found again that extraordinary palace of shadows—that arch, those pillars, those blood-like and purple stains, that jewel-like vegetation, and, at the end, that crypt, almost a sanctuary, and that stone which so closely resembled an altar.

He had not taken much notice of these details, but he had carried the general effect in his mind, and now he beheld it again.

At a certain height in the cliff in front of him he saw the crevice through which he had entered the first time, and which, from the point where he now stood, seemed inaccessible.

He again beheld, near the ogive arch, those low and obscure grottoes, caverns within the cave, which he had already observed from a distance. Now he was close to them. The one nearest to him was dry and easily approached.

Still nearer than that opening, he noticed a horizontal fissure in the rock above the level of the water and within reach of his hand. The crab was probably there.

He thrust in his hand as far as he could, and began to feel around in this dark hole.

Suddenly, he felt his arm seized.

What he experienced at that moment was indescribably horrible.

Something thin, disgusting, flat, slimy, adhesive, and living, had just wound itself around his bare arm in the dark. It crept up toward his breast. It was like the pressure of a leather thong and the twist of a gimlet. In less than a second an indescribable spiral form had twisted itself around his wrist and elbow and

had reached his shoulder. The point penetrated under his armpit.

Gilliatt threw himself backward, but could scarcely move. He seemed to be nailed fast.

With his left hand, which remained free, he took his knife, which he held between his teeth, and holding it in this hand, he braced himself against the rock in a desperate effort to withdraw his arm. He only succeeded in slightly loosening the ligature, which immediately resumed its pressure. It was as supple as leather, as solid as steel, as cold as night.

A second tentacle, narrow and pointed, issued from the crevice of the rock.

It was like a tongue from a huge mouth. It licked Gilliatt's naked body in a fearful manner, and, suddenly, stretching out very long and thin, it attached itself to his skin and surrounded his entire body. At the same time, unheard-of suffering, which was comparable to nothing which he had previously known, swelled Gilliatt's contracted muscles. He felt round and horrible punctures penetrating his skin. It seemed to him as though innumerable lips were fastened to his flesh, and were seeking to drink his blood.

A third tentacle waved from without the rock, felt Gilliatt, whipped his sides like a cord, and fastened itself there.

Agony at its height is mute. Gilliatt did not utter a cry. There was light enough for him to see the repulsive forms adhering to him.

A fourth tentacle—this one swift as an arrow—thrust itself forth and coiled itself around Gilliatt's waist.

It was impossible to cut or to tear away these slimy bands which adhered tightly to his body at a number of points. Each one of these points was the seat of frightful and peculiar pain. It was what would be experienced if one were being swallowed simultaneously by a throng of mouths, all too small.

A fifth tentacle sprang from the hole. It passed above the others and wound itself around Gilliatt's chest. This compression added to his anxiety; Gilliatt could scarcely breathe.

These tentacles, pointed at their extremities, gradually widened like the blade of a sword toward its hilt. All five were evidently attached to a common centre. They walked and climbed over Gilliatt.

He felt these strange points of pressure, which seemed to him like mouths, change position.

Suddenly, a large, round, flat, and slimy creature emerged from out of the crevice.

It was the centre; the five tentacles were fast to it, like the spokes to the hub of a wheel; on the opposite side of this foul disk could be seen the beginnings of three other tentacles, which remained under the hollow of the rock. Two staring eyes appeared in the midst of this slimy mass.

These eyes were fixed on Gilliatt.

He recognized the devil-fish.

II.

THE MONSTER

It is difficult for those who have not seen the devil-fish to believe in its existence.

Compared with it, the hydras of old were insignificant.

At certain times one is tempted to imagine that the mysterious forms which float in dreams meet, in the realms of the possible, with magnetic points to which their lineaments adhere, and that from these mysterious centres of a dream beings are created.

The Unknown has the marvelous at His disposal, and out of it He makes the monster.

Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod were only able to imagine the Chimera; God made the devil-fish.

When God wills it, he excels in the creation of the execrable.

The reason for this is, to strike the religious thinker with awe.

All ideals being admitted, if terror be the object, the devil-fish is the masterpiece.

The whale is enormous, the devil-fish is small; the hippopotamus has a heavy hide, the devil-fish is naked; the jararaca makes a hissing sound, the devil-fish is silent; the rhinoceros has a horn, the devil-fish has no horn; the scorpion has a sting, the devil-fish has no sting; the "buthus" (a kind of scorpion) has claws, the devil-fish has no claws; the howling monkey has a prehensile tail, the devil-fish has no tail; the shark has sharp fins, the devil-fish has no fins; the vespertilio-vampire has wings with claws, the devil-fish has no wings; the porcupine has quills, the devil-fish has no quills; the sword-fish has a sword, the devil-fish has no sword; the torpedo (cramp-fish) has an electric shock, the devil-fish has no electric shock; the toad has a virus, the devil-fish has no virus; the viper has venom, the devil-fish has no venom; the lion has claws, the devil-fish has no claws; the bearded vulture has a beak, the devil-fish has no beak; the crocodile has jaws, the devil-fish has no teeth.

The devil-fish has no muscular organization, no menacing cry, no armor, no horn, no sting, no claws, no prehensile or bruising tail, no sharp fins, no wings with claws, no quills, no sword, no electric shock, no virus, no venom, no beak, no teeth. Yet of all creatures, the devil-fish is the most formidably armed.

What, then, is the devil-fish? It is the cupping-glass.

In the rocks of the open sea, where the water displays and hides all its splendors; in the hollows of unfrequented rocks, in unknown caves, where vegetation, crustacea, and shell-fish abound; beneath the deep portals of the ocean, the swimmer who trusts himself there, attracted by the beauty of the place, runs the risk of encountering it. If you see one, do not be curious, but flee. On entering, one is dazzled; on leaving, terrified.

This kind of an encounter is always possible among the rocks in the open sea.

A gray form oscillates in the water; it is as thick as a man's arm, and about half an ell long; its outline is ragged; its form is that of a closed umbrella without a handle. This ragged outline gradually advances toward one. Suddenly, it opens, and eight radii dart, all at once, from around a face with two eyes; these radii are alive; they wave like a flame; when spread out they resemble a sort of wheel, four or five feet in diameter. A frightful expansion. This flings itself upon one.

The hydra harpoons the man.

This creature clings to its prey, covers it, and knots its long bands about it. Underneath, it is yellowish, on top, it is earth-colored; this dusty shade is indescribable; it

appears to be a creature made of ashes, living in the water. It is the shape of a spider with the coloring of a chameleon. When irritated, it becomes violet-colored. Its most frightful characteristic is its softness.

Its tentacles strangle; contact with it paralyzes one.

It resembles scurvy and gangrene. It is disease embodied in monstrosity.

It cannot be torn away. It adheres closely to its prey. How? By creating a vacuum. Its eight tentacles, large at the base, gradually taper and end in needle-like points. Under each of them, parallel with each other, are two rows of pustules decreasing in size, the larger ones near the head, the small ones at the end. Each row contains twenty-five; there are fifty pustules to each tentacle, and the whole creature has four hundred of them; these pustules are cupping-glasses.

These cupping-glasses are cylindrical, horny, livid cartilages. On the large species they gradually diminish from the size of a five-franc piece to that of a lentil. These small tubes can be thrust out, and withdrawn by the animal at will. They can pierce the prey more than the depth of an inch.

This sucking apparatus has all the delicacy of a key-board. It protrudes and recedes. It obeys the slightest wish of the animal. The

most exquisite sensibilities cannot equal the contractibility of these suckers, which are always in proportion to the interior movements of the creature and to external circumstances. This dragon is like a sensitive plant.

This is the monster which mariners call "poulpe," which science calls "cephalopod," and which legend calls "kraken." English sailors call it "devil-fish." They also call it "blood-sucker." In the isles of La Manche it is called "la pieuvre."

It is very rare in Guernsey, very small in Jersey, very large and quite common in Serk.

An engraving from Sonnini's edition of "Buffon" represents a *cephalopod* (devil-fish) crushing a frigate. Dennis Montford thinks that, in fact, the devil-fish of high latitudes is strong enough to sink a vessel. Bory Saint-Vincent denies this; but asserts that, in our latitudes, it does attack man. Go to Serk, and they will show you the hollow of a rock near Brecq'hou, where, a few years ago, the devil-fish seized, held fast, and drowned a lobster-fisher. Péron and Lamarck are mistaken when they doubt that the devil-fish, having no fins, can swim. He who writes these lines has seen, with his own eyes, in the cave at Serk called the Boutiques, a devil-fish swimming after a bather. When killed and measured it was found to be four English feet

in diameter, and four hundred suckers were counted. The dying creature thrust them out convulsively.

According to Dennis Montford,—one of those observers whose marvelous intuition sinks or raises them to the level of magicians,—the devil-fish has almost the passions of man; it is capable of hating. In fact, in the abstract, to be hideous is to hate. The hideous struggles under the natural law of elimination, which renders it hostile.

The devil-fish, when swimming, remains, as it were, in its sheath. It swims with all its arms folded. Imagine a sleeve sewed up, with a closed fist inside. This fist, which represents the head, pushes through the water and advances with a vague, undulating motion. Its two eyes, though large, are indistinct, being the color of the water.

The devil-fish, in pursuit or on the watch, hides itself; it contracts, it condenses itself, it reduces itself to the smallest compass. It merges into the shadow. It resembles a ripple of the waves. It looks like anything except like a living creature.

The devil-fish is deceitful. When one is not heeding it, suddenly it opens.

A glutinous mass possessed of a will, what could be more frightful! Glue filled with hatred.

It is in the most beautiful azure of the clear water that this hideous, voracious star rises out of the sea.

It gives no warning, which is terrible. Almost always one is already caught before perceiving this fish.

In the night, however, and particularly in the breeding season, it is phosphorescent. This frightful creature has its passions. It waits for hymen. It beautifies, brightens, and illuminates itself, and from the height of some rock it can be perceived below in the profound darkness, spread out in pallid irradiation, a spectre sun.

The devil-fish swims; it also walks. It somewhat resembles a fish, which does not prevent it from resembling a reptile. It crawls on the bottom of the sea. In walking, it uses its eight feelers. It drags itself along like a looper.

It has no bones, no blood, no flesh. It is flabby. There is nothing within it. It is a skin. One can turn its tentacles inside out, like the fingers of a glove.

It has a single orifice in its centre. Is this one opening the anus or the mouth? It is both.

The same aperture fulfils both functions. The place of entrance is also the exit.

The whole creature is cold.

The "carnasse" of the Mediterranean is repulsive. Contact with that animated gelatinous substance which envelops the swimmer is odious. In it the hands sink, the nails dig, without killing it; tear, without removing it; a sort of slippery and tenacious creature which glides between one's fingers; but nothing is more horrible than the appearance of the devil-fish,—Medusa attended by eight serpents.

No grasp equals the embrace of the cephalopod.

It is the sucking apparatus attacking one. One has to combat with a vacuum furnished with claws, which make an indescribable scar, although they neither scratch nor bite. A bite is formidable, but less so than suction. A claw is nothing in comparison to the cupping-glass. The claw means the beast entering into your flesh, the cupping-glass means yourself entering into the beast.

The muscles swell, the fibres stretch, the skin cracks under the loathsome weight, blood spurts forth and mixes frightfully with the lymph of the mollusc. The creature fastens itself upon one by a thousand dreadful mouths; the hydra incorporates itself in the man. The man is amalgamated with the hydra. They form but one. This idea haunts one. The tiger can but devour one; the

devil-fish, oh, horror! sucks one in. It draws one to it and into it, and, bound, glued, and powerless, one feels one's self slowly absorbed into that frightful sack, which is the monster itself.

Beyond the terror of being eaten alive is the inexpressible terror of being imbibed alive.

Science at first rejects these strange animals, through its habits of excessive prudence, even in the presence of facts; then it decides to study them, it dissects them, it classifies them, catalogues and labels them; it procures specimens; it exposes them to view under glass in museums; they are named, called molluscs, invertebrates, and radiates; it locates them, a little above calamars, a little below cuttle-fish; it finds something analogous to these salt-water hydras in the fresh-water "argyronecte"; it divides them into large, medium, and small species; it admits the smaller species more readily than the larger, which is, moreover, the tendency of science in all branches, which prefers to be microscopic rather than telescopic; it examines their construction and calls them cephalopods; it counts their antennæ and calls them octopods. That done, it leaves them. Where science abandons them, philosophy takes them up.

Philosophy in its turn studies these crea-

tures. It goes less far and also farther than science. It does not dissect them, it meditates about them. Where the scalpel has worked, conjecture follows. It seeks the final cause. It occasions the thinker profound perplexity. These creatures almost disturb one's ideas of the Creator. They are hideous surprises. They trouble the peaceful contemplator. He regards them with amazement. They are the recognized forms of evil. What can one think in the presence of these blasphemies of creation against itself? Who is accountable for this?

The possible is a formidable matrix. Mystery forms itself into monsters. Fragments of shadow issue from the inherent mass, rend themselves, break loose, roll, float, condense themselves, and borrow from the surrounding darkness; they are subject to unknown polarizations, become alive, and compose for themselves an indescribable body out of darkness, and an indescribable soul out of noxious vapors, and depart—these larvæ—to dwell among living things. It is somewhat like shadows converted into beasts. For what purpose? For what use? Once more we return to the old question.

These animals are phantoms as well as monsters. It is demonstrated that they exist, and yet it is improbable. To be, is their achieve-

ment; not to be, would be their right. They are the amphitheatre of death. Their improbability complicates their existence. They border on the frontier of humanity and people the limit of the chimerical. If one denies the existence of the vampire, the devil-fish appears. Their multitude is a certainty which destroys our confidence. Optimism, which is right, nevertheless, is almost disconcerted before them. They are the visible edges of the circle of darkness. They mark the transition from one reality to another. They seem to belong to that vision of terrible creatures indistinctly seen by the dreamer through the loophole of the night.

This existence of monsters, first in the invisible world, then in the material world, has been suspected, perhaps perceived, by the austere raptures and the intent eyes of the magi and philosophers. Hence the surmise that there is a hell. The demon is the tiger of the invisible world. The wild beast which devours souls has been denounced to the human race by two dreamers, the one named John; the other, Dante.

If, in fact, the circles of shadows continue indefinitely, if one ring follows another, if this increase continues in unlimited progression, if this sequence exists,—which for our part we are determined to doubt,—it is certain that

the devil-fish at one end proves Satan at the other.

It is evident that evil at one extremity proves the existence of evil at the other.

Every evil creature, like every perverted intelligence, is a sphinx.

A terrible sphinx, proposing the terrible enigma. The enigma of evil.

It is this perfection of evil which has sometimes caused great minds to lean toward the belief in a dual God, toward the formidable double-headed deity of the Manichæans.

A piece of Chinese silk, stolen in the last war from the palace of the emperor of China, represents a shark devouring a crocodile, which is devouring a serpent, which is devouring an eagle, which is devouring a swallow, which is devouring a caterpillar.

All nature which lies before our eyes is devouring and being devoured. Carnivorous creatures devour each other.

However, learned men, who are also philosophers, and consequently optimists, find, or think they find, the explanation. Among others, Bonnet, of Geneva,—that mysterious and exact thinker who was opposed to Buffon, as, later, Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire was to Cuvier,—was impressed with the final end. The explanation is this: everywhere death necessitates interment. Those who devour are those who bury.

All beings enter into each other. To decay is to nourish. Frightful cleansing of the globe. Carnivorous man is himself also a consumer. Our life is made up of death. Such is the terrifying law. We are sepulchres.

In the dim light of this world, this fatal order of things produces monsters. One says: Wherefore? For this reason.

Is this the explanation? Is this the reply to the question? But, then, why not another order? Thus the question arises again.

Let us live, so be it.

But let us endeavor to make death a progress for us. Let us aspire to worlds less dark than ours.

Let us follow conscience, which leads us thither.

For, let us never forget it, the best is only found by the truly good.

III.

ANOTHER SORT OF COMBAT IN THE CAVERN

Such was the creature in whose power Gilliatt had been for several minutes.

This monster was the inhabitant of this grotto. It was the frightful genius of the place. A sort of dark demon of the water.

This horrid creature was the centre of all this magnificence.

The month before, on the day on which Gilliatt had for the first time penetrated into the grotto, the dark outline, of which he had caught a glimpse in the hidden recesses of the water, was the devil-fish.

This was its home.

When Gilliatt entered this cave for the second time in pursuit of the crab—when he had perceived the crevice in which he supposed the crab was hiding—the devil-fish was there, lying in wait in that hole.

Is it possible to imagine this lying-in-wait?

Not a bird would dare to brood, not an egg would dare to hatch, not a flower would dare

to open, not a breast would dare to give milk, not a heart would dare to love, not a spirit would dare to take flight, if one dreamed of the sinister creatures lying in wait in the abyss.

Gilliatt had thrust his arm into the hole. The devil-fish had caught it.

It held it.

He was the fly for this spider.

Gilliatt was up to his waist in the water, his feet clutched the round slippery stones, his right arm grasped and fettered by the flat coils of the tentacles of the devil-fish, and his body almost hidden by the folds and crossings of this horrible bandage.

Of the eight arms of the devil-fish, three adhered to the rock, while five adhered to Gilliatt. In this way, fastened on one side to the granite, on the other to the man, it chained Gilliatt to the rock. He had two hundred and fifty suckers upon him. A combination of agony and disgust results from being thus pressed by an enormous fist, whose elastic fingers are nearly a metre in length, and the interior surface of which is full of living pustules which penetrate the flesh.

As we have said, one cannot tear one's self away from the devil-fish. If one should attempt to do so, one is but the more surely bound. It would only wind itself the tighter.

Its effort increases in proportion to that of the victim. The more the motion, the greater the constriction.

Gilliatt had but one resource—his knife.

His left hand alone was free; but it has already been demonstrated how readily he could use it. It might have been said that he had two right hands.

His open knife was in this hand.

The tentacles of the devil-fish cannot be cut; they are leathery and impossible to sever, and slip from under the blade; moreover, they are so placed that a cut into these tentacles would make an incision into one's own flesh.

The devil-fish is formidable; nevertheless, there is a way of subduing it. The fishermen of Serk know it. Anyone who has seen them executing certain rapid movements at sea knows it. The porpoises also know it; they have a way of biting the cuttle-fish which cuts off its head. Hence all the calamars, all the cuttle-fish, and all the devil-fish found headless in the sea.

The devil-fish is, in fact, vulnerable only in the head.

Gilliatt was not ignorant of this.

He had never seen a devil-fish of this size. As soon as it struck him he found that he had been seized by one of the larger species. Any other man would have been frightened.

For destroying the devil-fish, as for killing the bull, one particular moment must be seized; it is the instant when the bull lowers his neck, when the devil-fish thrusts forth its head—a fleeting moment. He who fails to strike at that juncture is lost.

All that we have narrated lasted but a few moments. Gilliatt, however, felt the suction increase from the two hundred and fifty cupping-glasses.

The devil-fish is treacherous. It tries, at first, to benumb its prey. It seizes it, and then waits as long as it can.

Gilliatt held his knife. The suction increased.

He looked at the devil-fish; it looked at him.

Suddenly, the creature detached its sixth tentacle from the rock, and, throwing it on Gilliatt, tried to seize his left arm.

At the same time it thrust its head forward swiftly. A second more and its mouth would have been applied to Gilliatt's breast. Gilliatt, wounded in the side, and with his two arms pinioned, would have been dead.

But he, knowing he was watched, was on his guard.

He avoided the tentacles, and at the moment when the devil-fish was about to bite his breast, his armed fist descended on the creature's head.

Two contortions in opposite directions ensued, that of the devil-fish and that of Gilliatt.

It was like the conflict between two flashes of lightning.

Gilliatt plunged the point of his knife in the flat, viscous mass, and with a gyratory movement, like the twist of a whip-lash, describing a circle around the two eyes, he tore out the head as one wrenches out a tooth.

All was over.

The whole creature fell.

It resembled a bandage unrolling. The suction-pump destroyed, the vacuum no longer existed. The four hundred suckers released their hold simultaneously from the rock and the man.

This ragged mass sank to the bottom of the water.

Gilliatt, breathless after the combat, could perceive, on the rocks at his feet, two shapeless gelatinous heaps, the head on one side, the remainder on the other.

We say the remainder, because one cannot say the body.

However, Gilliatt, fearing some convulsive return of the death agony, retreated beyond the reach of the tentacles.

But the creature was actually dead.

Gilliatt closed his knife.

IV.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN AND NOTHING IS LOST

It was time that he had killed the devil-fish. He was almost suffocated; his right arm and his body were purple, more than two hundred swellings could be seen on them; the blood flowed from some of them. The remedy for these injuries is salt water. Gilliatt plunged into it. At the same time he rubbed himself with the palm of his hand. The swellings subsided under these rubbings.

As he retreated and plunged deeper into the water, he had unconsciously approached a cavern which he had already noticed near the crevice, where he had been attacked by the devil-fish.

This cavern extended obliquely under the large walls of the cave, and was perfectly dry. The stones which were heaped there had raised the bottom above the level of ordinary tides. This aperture was a rather large, elliptic arch; a man, by stooping, could enter it. The green

light of the submarine grotto penetrated and illumined it slightly.

It happened that Gilliatt raised his eyes mechanically while hastily rubbing his swollen skin.

His glance penetrated into this cavern.

He shuddered.

He fancied that he saw at the end of that hole, in the shadow, a sort of laughing face.

Gilliatt was ignorant of the word hallucination, but he was familiar with the idea. Those mysterious encounters with the improbable, which, for want of a more definite term, we call hallucinations, exist in nature. Whether illusions or realities, visions exist. He who is in their presence sees them. Gilliatt, as we have said, was a dreamer. He possessed this great gift, that he was sometimes subject to hallucinations, like a prophet. One cannot with impunity be a dreamer in solitary places.

He believed it to be one of these mirages by which, familiar as he was with the night, he had more than once been deceived.

The cavity almost exactly resembled a lime-kiln. It was a low niche in the submerged arch, whose abrupt groins gradually contracted toward the end of the crypt, where the pebbles, fragments of rocks, and the vault of the rock joined, and where the cavern ended.

He entered, and, bending his head, approached what he saw at the extremity.

Something was really grinning.

It was a death's-head.

Not only the skull, but also the skeleton.

A human skeleton was lying in this cave.

Under such circumstances a brave man will wish to find out the truth.

Gilliatt looked around him.

He was surrounded by a multitude of crabs.

This multitude did not move. It presented the appearance of a dead ant-hill. All these crabs were inert. Their shells were empty.

These groups, scattered about, made irregular patterns on the pavement of pebbles which formed the floor of the cave.

Gilliatt had been looking elsewhere, and had walked upon them without perceiving them.

At the extremity of the crypt, which he had reached, they were in still greater quantities. They were a heap of motionless but extended antennæ, claws, and jaws. Open claws stood upright and did not close again. Their bony shells were no longer moved by their sharp claws; some of them were turned over and showed their livid cavities. This pile resembled a *mêlée* of besiegers, and lay massed like brushwood.

It was beneath this heap that the skeleton lay.

Beneath this confused mass of tentacles and scales, the cranium, with its sutures, the vertebræ, femurs, tibias, and long-jointed fingers with nails, could be perceived. The cavity of the ribs was full of crabs. Some heart had once beaten there. Sea-mould covered the sockets of the eyes. Limpets had left their slime in the nasal cavities. Moreover, in this nook of rock there was neither seaweed nor grass, and not a breath of air. No movement. The teeth grinned.

The sombre aspect of a laugh is its imitation by a death's-head.

This marvelous palace of the abyss, embroidered and incrusted by all the gems of the sea, had at length revealed itself and told its secret. It was a den—the devil-fish inhabited it. It was a tomb—a man lay there.

The spectral immobility of the skeleton and of the surrounding creatures swayed somewhat, owing to the motion imparted by the submarine waters which waved under this petrifaction. The crabs, a frightful confused mass, seemed to be just finishing their repast. These upper shells were apparently eating this skeleton. Nothing could be more strange than this dead vermin on this dead prey. Sombre continuations of death.

Gilliatt saw before him the larder of the devil fish.

Sad sight, and one in which profound horror could be seen to its fullest extent. The crabs had devoured the man, the devil-fish had eaten the crabs.

There was no vestige of clothing near the skeleton. He must have been seized naked.

Gilliatt scrutinized it attentively, and began to remove the crabs from the man. Who was this man? The body had been admirably dissected. One would have said that it had been anatomically prepared; all the flesh had been removed; not a muscle remained, not a bone was lacking. If Gilliatt had been a professional anatomist, he might have verified this. The denuded periosteums were white and polished, as if burnished. If it had not been for some greenish touches of conferva here and there, they would have been taken for ivory. The cartilaginous partitions were delicately smoothed down and preserved. The tomb makes such sinister jewelry as this.

The corpse was almost buried beneath the dead crabs; Gilliatt removed them.

Suddenly, he leaned eagerly forward.

He had just perceived a sort of band around the vertebral column.

It was a leather belt which had evidently been buckled around the waist of the man during life.

The leather was mouldy; the buckle, rusty.

Gilliatt drew this belt toward him. The vertebræ resisted, and he was obliged to break them in order to obtain it. The belt was intact. A crust of small shells was commencing to form upon it. He touched it and felt a hard, square object within. He could not think of attempting to undo the buckle, so he cut the leather with his knife.

The belt contained a small iron box and a few gold pieces. Gilliatt counted twenty guineas.

The iron box was a sailor's old tobacco-box, which opened by a spring. It was rusty and very firmly closed. The spring, being completely oxidized, would not work.

The knife once more extricated Gilliatt from his dilemma. A pressure from the point of the blade caused the lid of the box to fly up.

The box opened.

There was nothing inside but paper. A little package of very thin sheets, folded in four, covered the bottom of the box. They were damp, but not injured. The hermetically sealed box had preserved them. These Gilliatt unfolded.

They consisted of three bank-notes, each for a thousand pounds sterling, making altogether seventy-five thousand francs.

Gilliatt refolded them, replaced them in the

box, utilized the little space which remained in it by adding the twenty guineas, and closed the box as well as he could.

He now began to examine the belt.

The leather, originally glazed on the outside, was rough on the inside. On this unpolished surface some letters were traced in black, with thick ink. Gilliatt deciphered these letters, and read, "Sieur Clubin."

V.

IN THE INTERVAL WHICH SEPARATES

SIX INCHES FROM TWO FEET

THERE IS ROOM TO LODGE DEATH

Gilliatt replaced the box in the belt, and put the belt in the pocket of his trousers.

He left the skeleton to the crabs, with the dead devil-fish by its side.

While Gilliatt had been occupied with the devil-fish and the skeleton, the rising tide had flooded the mouth of the entrance. Gilliatt's only means of exit was to plunge under the arch. This he did without effort, for he was acquainted with the exit, and was also skilled in feats of swimming.

We have had a glimpse of the tragedy which had occurred there ten weeks before. One monster had seized the other. The devil-fish had caught Clubin.

What had taken place in the inexorable gloom might almost be called the encounter of hypocrites. The collision of these two creatures had taken place at the bottom of

this abyss, between these two beings made up of crimes and darkness, the one which was a beast had destroyed the other which had a soul. Sinister justice.

The crab feeds on carcasses, the devil-fish feeds on crabs. The devil-fish stops on its way any creature which swims,—an otter, a dog, a man if it can,—drinks the blood, and leaves the dead body at the bottom of the water. Crabs are the sexton-beetles of the sea. Decomposing flesh attracts them; they come; they devour the corpse; the devil-fish devours them. Dead creatures disappear in the crab, the crab in its turn disappears in the devil-fish. We have already indicated this law.

Clubin had served the devil-fish for bait.

The devil-fish had caught him and drowned him; the crabs had devoured him. Some wave had thrust him into the cave at the further end of the niche where Gilliatt found him.

Gilliatt retraced his steps and searched the rock for sea-urchins and limpets, as he no longer had appetite for crabs. It would have seemed to him as though he were eating human flesh.

Moreover, he only thought of supping as best he could, before departing. Henceforth nothing would stop him. Great storms are always followed by a calm, which sometimes

lasts for several days. There was now no danger to be apprehended from the sea. Gilliatt had made up his mind to leave the following morning. During the night it was important to keep the barrier in its place between the two Douvres, on account of the tide; but at the break of day Gilliatt intended to remove this barrier, to push the sloop out of the Douvres, and to set sail for Saint Sampson. The light breeze which was blowing from the southwest was precisely the wind which he required.

It was now the first quarter of the May moon; the days were long.

When Gilliatt had finished wandering among the rocks, and had somewhat satisfied his appetite, he returned to the defile in the Douvres where the sloop lay; the sun had set; twilight blended with that half moonlight which shines from the crescent moon; the tide had attained its height and was beginning to fall. The smoke-stack of the engine, rising upright above the sloop, had been covered by foam from the tempest, leaving a layer of salt which looked white in the moonlight.

This reminded Gilliatt that the squall had thrown considerable rain-water and sea-water into his sloop, and that, if he wished to start the next day, he must bail it out.

When he left the vessel to go in search of

crabs he noticed about six inches of water in the hold. His bailing-scoop would be sufficient to bail out this water.

On reaching the sloop Gilliatt started with terror. There were nearly two feet of water in the boat.

A formidable fact, for the boat was leaking.

It had gradually filled during Gilliatt's absence. Loaded as it was, twenty inches of water was a dangerous addition. A little more, and it would sink. If Gilliatt had returned an hour later he would probably have found only the smoke-stack and the mast out of water.

There was not even a moment for deliberation. The leak must be found and stopped, after which the boat must be emptied of the water, or at least lightened. The pumps of the Durande were lost in the wreck. Gilliatt was reduced to the bailing-scoop of the sloop.

First of all, he must find the leak. That was of the most urgent necessity.

Gilliatt set to work immediately, without even taking time to dress again, although he was shivering from cold. He no longer felt either cold or hunger.

The sloop continued to fill. Fortunately there was no wind. The slightest swell would have sunk it.

The moon set.

Groping about, bent low and half submerged, Gilliatt searched for a long time.

At last he discovered the leak.

During the gale, at the critical moment when the sloop had swerved, the strong bark had bumped and rubbed quite violently against the rock. One of the projections of the Little Douvre had stove a hole in the starboard side of the hull.

This leak was, unluckily,—one might almost say, perfidiously,—situated near the joints of the two riders, and this circumstance, joined with the fury of the hurricane, had prevented Gilliatt from seeing it during his vague and rapid survey at the height of the storm.

The fracture had this alarming feature, that it was large, and this advantageous one, that, although now submerged by the weight of the water within, it was above the water-line.

At the instant when the crack had been made the waves were very boisterous in the passage, and as the water was no longer smooth, it had penetrated the sloop through the leak; beneath this extra weight the boat had settled several inches, and even after the waves had subsided, the weight of the water, which had filtered through, had raised the water-line, and had kept the hole under water. In that lay the danger.

The water had increased from six to twenty inches. But if one could succeed in stopping the leak, it would be possible to empty the sloop; once the bark emptied, it would rise again to the normal water-line, the fracture would be above water, and this being dry, the reparation would be easy, or at least possible. Gilliatt, as we have already said, still possessed his carpenter's tools in fairly good condition.

But how many uncertainties were there before attaining that end! how many dangers! how many adverse chances! Gilliatt heard the water gushing mercilessly. One shock, and all would sink. What wretchedness! Perhaps it was already too late.

Gilliatt reproached himself bitterly. He ought to have, at once, perceived the damage. The six inches of water in the hold should have warned him. It was stupid of him to have attributed these six inches of water to the rain and the spray. He reproached himself with having slept, with having eaten; he reproached himself with having been fatigued; he even almost blamed himself for the tempest and the night. He thought of everything as his fault.

These bitter self-reproaches, which he uttered as he went about his work, did not prevent him from giving it careful attention.

The leak had been found, and that was the

first step; to stop it would be the second. Nothing further could be done just now. Carpenter's work cannot be done under water.

One favorable circumstance was, that the damage to the hull had occurred in the space comprised between the two chains which fastened the smoke-stack of the engine to the starboard side. The plug used to stop the leak could be fastened to these chains.

Meanwhile, the water was gaining.

It was now over two feet deep.

Gilliatt was above his knees in the water.

VI.

DE PROFUNDIS AD ALTUM

(From the Depth to the Height)

After having rigged the sloop, Gilliatt had quite a large tarpaulin left, provided with long lashings at its four corners.

He took this tarpaulin and fastened two corners of it, by the lashings, to the two rings of the chains of the smoke-stack on the side of the leak, and flung the tarpaulin overboard. The tarpaulin fell like a sheet between the Little Douvre and the bark, and sunk in the waves. The pressure of the water trying to enter the hold, forced it against the hull and against the hole. The greater the pressure of the water, the firmer the tarpaulin adhered. The water itself pressed it against the leak. The wound of the bark was dressed.

This tarred canvas interposed between the interior of the hold and the waves without. Not a single drop of water could enter now.

The leak was covered, but not calked.

This was a respite.

Gilliatt took the scoop and began to bail

out the water. It was quite time that the boat should be lightened. This work warmed him a little, but his fatigue was extreme. He was forced to acknowledge to himself that he could not finish, and that he would not be able to bail the water out of the hold. He had scarcely eaten anything, and he was humiliated to find himself exhausted.

He measured the progress of his work by the falling of the level of the water at his knees. This fall was slow.

Moreover, the leak was only temporarily stopped. The damage was palliated, not repaired. The tarpaulin, which the water had thrust in the opening, began to make a swelling in the hold. It seemed as though a fist were under this canvas, trying to force it in. The strong, tarred canvas resisted, but the swelling and the tension increased; it was possible that the canvas might give way, and at any moment the swelling might burst. The water would then begin to re-enter.

In such a case, as the crews of vessels in distress well know, a plug is the only resource. They take every kind of rag near at hand, all that in technical language is called *fourrures*, and of these they press as many as possible into the hollow of the swelling of the tarpaulin.

Gilliatt had none of these *fourrures*. All the rags and stuffings which he had stored up

had either been used in his work or dispersed by the gale.

At the most he might have found some remnants of them by searching among the rocks. The sloop was sufficiently lightened for him to absent himself for a quarter of an hour; but how could he make this search without a light? The darkness was complete. There was no longer any moon; nothing but the dark starry sky. Gilliatt had no dry cordage with which to make a wick, no tallow with which to make a candle, no fire with which to light it, no lantern with which to shelter it. Everything in the bark and on the rocks appeared confused and indistinct. The water was heard splashing around the damaged hull; the crack could not even be seen; it was by feeling with his hands that Gilliatt proved the increasing tension of the tarpaulin. In this darkness, it would be impossible to make any useful search for pieces of sail-cloth and cordage scattered among the breakers. How was he to gather these fragments when unable to see clearly? Gilliatt gazed sadly at the night. All those stars and no candle.

The quantity of water in the bark having diminished, the pressure from without was increased. The swelling of the tarpaulin was greater. It became more and more distended. It resembled an abscess ready to burst. The

situation, which had improved for a moment, had again become threatening.

A plug was absolutely necessary.

Gilliatt had nothing except his clothes.

He had placed them to dry, as will be remembered, on the projecting rocks of the Little Douvre. He hastened to get them, and placed them on the edge of the sloop.

He took his tarred coat, and, kneeling in the water, plunged it into the opening, pressing the swelling of the tarpaulin outward, and consequently emptying it. To the coat he added the sheepskin; to the sheepskin, the woolen shirt; to the shirt, the jacket. The hole received them all.

He had now but one garment on; this he took off, and with his trousers he enlarged and strengthened the plugging. The plug was made, and appeared to be sufficient.

This stuffing protruded from the exterior of the opening, with the tarpaulin for an envelope. The water, in its endeavor to enter, pressed against this obstruction, spread it out advantageously over the gap, and consolidated it. It was a sort of exterior compress.

In the interior, the centre only of the swelling having been pressed back, there remained all around the crack and the plug a circular pad of the tarpaulin, which adhered still more closely because of the very inequalities of the

opening which retained it. The leak was stopped.

But nothing could be more precarious. These pointed projections of the fracture which held the tarpaulin might pierce it, and through these holes the water would re-enter. In the darkness, Gilliatt could not even have perceived it. It was scarcely probable that this plug could last until morning. Gilliatt's anxiety assumed a different form, but he felt it increase at the same time that he felt his strength give way.

He had resumed the work of bailing out the hold, but his arms, exhausted by his efforts, could scarcely raise the scoopful of water. He was naked and shivering.

Gilliatt felt the sad approach of the last moment.

One possible chance suggested itself to him. Perhaps there was a sail in sight. A fisherman who might perchance be passing near the waters of the Douvres could come to his assistance. The moment had arrived when a collaborator was absolutely necessary. With a man and a lantern all might be saved. Two together could easily bail out the hold; as soon as the water could be bailed out, the boat, being no longer weighed down by it, would rise and resume its water-line, the break would be above water, repairs could be

made, the plug could be immediately replaced by a piece of planking, and the temporary expedient which was resorted to, to stop the fracture, could be replaced by permanent repairs. Otherwise it would be necessary to wait until morning, to wait all night! A dreadful delay which might prove fatal. Gilliatt was in feverish haste.

If, perchance, some ship's lantern was in sight, he could signal from the top of the large Douvre. The weather was calm; there was no wind; the sea was smooth; a man moving against the starry background of the sky might possibly be seen. The captain of a ship, or even the master of a sloop, would not sail at night in the waters in the vicinity of the Douvres without turning his telescope toward the rock as a precaution.

Gilliatt hoped that he might be seen.

He climbed the wreck, grasped the knotted rope, and ascended the large Douvre.

Not a sail was above the horizon; not a ship's lantern. As far as he could see, there was nothing on the water.

No assistance was possible, and he could make no resistance.

Gilliatt for the first time felt himself without resources.

He was now overpowered by fate. He, together with his boat, with the engine of the

Durande, with all his labor, with all his success, and with all his courage, seemed about to disappear in the abyss. He had no means of continuing the struggle, so he became listless. How could he prevent the tide from returning? the water from rising? the night from continuing? The plug was his sole reliance. Gilliatt had exhausted himself and stripped himself to make it and complete it; he could neither strengthen it nor render it firmer; such as it was, the plug must remain, and practically all effort had come to an end. The hastily constructed stuffing applied to the leak was at the mercy of the sea. How would this inert obstruction stand the test? It was this which had to sustain the combat, not Gilliatt. It was these rags; it was no longer this mind. It would only require a heavy wave to reopen the break. Everything depended upon the amount of pressure brought to bear upon it.

All was about to be solved by a blind struggle between two mechanical powers. Henceforth Gilliatt could neither help the one, nor stop the other. He was no more than a spectator of his own life or death.

This Gilliatt, who had hitherto conquered everything, found himself at this last moment replaced by an unconscious resistance.

None of the trials and terrors which Gilliatt had experienced compared with this.

On arriving at the Douvres rock he had been surrounded and oppressed by solitude. He had been more than surrounded by it, he had been enveloped in it. A thousand dangers had confronted him. There had been the wind ready to blow, the sea ready to roar. It is impossible to silence the mouth of the wind, impossible to extract the teeth from the jaws of the sea.

However, he had struggled; one man alone, he had fought hand to hand with the ocean; he had wrestled with the tempest.

He had coped with still other anxieties and necessities.

He had contended with every form of distress. He had been obliged to accomplish his work without tools, to remove burdens without help, to solve problems without the aid of science, to eat and drink without provisions, to sleep without a bed or roof.

On this rock, which was a torture-rack, he had been tortured in turn by the different executioners of Nature, who is a mother when she pleases and an executioner when she chooses.

He had conquered isolation, conquered hunger, conquered thirst, conquered cold, conquered fever, conquered labor, conquered sleep. He had encountered obstacles which had combined to bar his passage. After

being left destitute, he had fought the elements; after the tide, the tempest; after the tempest, the devil-fish; after the monster, the spectre.

Finally, this sad irony. In this rock, from which Gilliatt had expected to depart in triumph, the dead Clubin had just gazed upon him with a mocking laugh.

The grin of the spectre was well founded. Gilliatt saw himself lost. He saw himself as dead as Clubin.

Winter, famine, fatigue, the taking to pieces of the wreck, the transporting of the engine, the blasts of the equinox, the wind, the thunder, the devil-fish—all these were as nothing compared to the leak.

Against cold one could use, as Gilliatt had done, fire; against hunger, the shell-fish of the rock; against thirst, the rain; against the difficulties of the rescue, industry and energy; against the tide and the storm, the breakwater; against the devil-fish, the knife; against the leak, nothing.

The hurricane left him this sinister adieu. A last struggle, a traitorous thrust, an underhand attack of the conquered against the conqueror. The tempest cast this arrow behind it in its flight. His defeated antagonists turned and struck.

It was the dagger-thrust of the abyss.

The tempest can be fought, but how can one combat a leak?

If the plug should yield, if the leak should reopen, nothing could prevent the boat from sinking. It would be the bursting of the ligature of the artery.

And the sloop once at the bottom of the water with that heavy burden, the engine, there would be no means of raising it. This gigantic effort, the result of two Titanic months, would result in annihilation. It would be impossible to begin anew. Gilliatt had now neither forge nor materials to work with. At daybreak, perhaps, he might see all his work sink slowly and irrecoverably into the depths.

How terrible to feel the sombre power beneath one!

The abyss drew him to itself.

With his bark submerged, there would be nothing left for him to do but to die from the effects of hunger and cold like the other man who had been shipwrecked on l'Homme rock.

During two long months the powers which hover invisibly over the world had witnessed this: on the one side, the expanse, the waves, the winds, the lightnings, the meteors; on the other, a man. On one side, the sea; on the other, a human mind. On one side, the Infinite; on the other, an atom.

And a battle had taken place.

And now, perhaps, this miracle had come to naught.

Thus this unheard-of heroism might amount to nothing; thus had ended in despair this formidable combat which he had undertaken, this struggle of Nothing against Everything, this Iliad against One.

Gilliatt looked despairingly into space.

He had now not even a garment. He was naked before immensity.

Then, overwhelmed by that unknown vastness, no longer knowing what to do, confronting the shadows of night in the presence of this impenetrable darkness, surrounded by the sound of the waters, of the waves, of the surges, of the billows, of the foam, of the gales; beneath the clouds, beneath the gusts, beneath the vast, scattered forces; beneath this mysterious changing of the firmament, of stars and of tombs; beneath the possible purpose of these boundless forces, having around and beneath him the ocean, and above him the constellations, his courage failed under the weight of the impenetrable; he sank down, lying full length, with his back against the rock, his face toward the stars, vanquished, and, clasping his hands before the terrible immensity, he cried in this vast solitude, "Mercy!"

Overwhelmed by the infinite, he prayed to it.

He was there, alone, at night, on this rock, in the midst of the ocean, overcome by exhaustion, having the appearance of one struck by lightning, naked as a gladiator in the circus, only instead of the arena, there was the abyss; instead of wild beasts, darkness; instead of the eyes of the populace, the gaze of the Unknown; instead of vestals, stars; instead of Cæsar, God.

It seemed to him that he felt himself dissolving in cold, fatigue, weakness, prayer, and darkness; and his eyes closed.

VII.

THE UNKNOWN CAN HEAR

Several hours passed. The sun rose with dazzling brightness. Its first ray fell on a motionless form on the plateau of the Great Douvre. It was Gilliatt. He was still stretched upon the rock.

This frozen, stiffened nudity could no longer shiver. His closed eyelids were pallid. It would have been difficult to tell whether he were not a corpse.

The sun seemed to gaze upon him.

If this naked man were not dead, he was so near death that the slightest cold wind would have been sufficient to have ended his life.

The wind began to blow, warm and vivifying, the spring-like breath of May.

Meanwhile, the sun mounted in the deep blue sky; its rays grew crimson as they became less horizontal. Its light gave forth heat. It enveloped Gilliatt. He did not move. If he breathed, it was with that feeble, dying respiration which would hardly cloud a mirror.

The sun continued its course, shining less and less obliquely upon Gilliatt. The wind,

which until then had been merely warm, was now hot.

This rigid and naked body still remained motionless; but the skin seemed less livid.

The sun, as it approached the zenith, shone perpendicularly on the plateau of the Douvre. A flood of light descended from the sky; the vast reflection from the glassy sea enhanced it; the rock began to grow warm, and revived the man. A sigh escaped from Gilliatt's breast. He was alive.

The sun continued its caresses, which were almost burning. The wind, which was the south wind, the summer wind, approached Gilliatt like a mouth, breathing gently.

Gilliatt moved.

The sea was inexpressibly calm. It murmured like a nurse beside her child. The waves seemed to be lulling the rock.

The sea-birds, which knew Gilliatt, flew anxiously around him.

They did not now display their former wild restlessness, but rather something inexpressibly tender and fraternal. They uttered little cries, they seemed to be calling him.

A sea-gull, who, no doubt, loved him, was so familiar as to come quite close to him, and began to call to him. He did not seem to hear. It jumped upon his shoulder and pecked gently at his lips. Gilliatt opened his eyes.

The wild birds contentedly flew away.

Gilliatt arose, stretched himself like an awakened lion, ran to the edge of the platform, and looked down into the passage between the Douvres. The sloop was there, intact. The plug had held firm; it had probably been but little disturbed by the sea.

Everything was safe.

Gilliatt was no longer weary. His strength had returned. His swoon had been a sleep.

He bailed out the sloop, so that the hold was dry, which raised the leak above the water-line, dressed himself, ate, drank, and was happy.

The leak, examined by daylight, required more work than he had anticipated. It was a very serious damage. It would take Gilliatt a full day to repair it.

At dawn on the following day, after having unfastened the barrier and opened the exit from the defile, dressed in those clothes which had combated the leak, wearing Clubin's belt, which contained the seventy-five thousand francs, standing on the repaired sloop, alongside of the rescued engine, with a good wind and a favorable sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres rock. He steered for Guernsey.

At the moment of his departure from the rock, anyone who had been there would have heard him singing, in a low voice, the air, "Bonnie Dundee."

PART THREE

DÉRUCHETTE

BOOK ONE

NIGHT AND THE MOON

I.

THE BELL OF THE PORT

The Saint Sampson of to-day is almost a city; the Saint Sampson of forty years ago was only a village.

When the spring came and the winter watches were passed, the inhabitants shortened the evenings by going to bed at nightfall. Saint Sampson was an ancient curfew parish, and had still continued the habit of blowing out the candles early. The people went to bed and arose with the sun. These old Norman villages in this respect follow the habits of their fowls.

In addition, let us remark that, with the exception of a few rich bourgeois families, the population of Saint Sampson consists of quarrymen and carpenters.

The port is a repairing port. All day long the people quarry stone or hew beams; in one place can be heard the pick-ax, in another, the hammer. A continual handling of oak and granite. At night, the workmen, over-

powered by fatigue, sleep like lead. Hard work makes heavy sleepers.

One evening in the beginning of May, Mess Lethierry, after having gazed for some moments through the trees at the crescent moon, and having listened to the steps of Déruchette as she walked alone in the cool of the evening, in the garden of the Bravées, went to his chamber, which faced the port, and retired. Douce and Grace were already in bed. Everyone in the house was asleep, except Déruchette. Everyone in Saint Sampson was also asleep. All the doors and shutters were closed. There was no passing to and fro in the streets. A few lights, like the blinking of eyes about to close, gleamed brightly here and there from the small windows in the roofs, showing that the servants were going to bed. It was some time since nine o'clock had struck from the old Roman, ivy-draped clock-tower, which shares with the Church of Saint Brelade, of Jersey, the peculiarity of bearing as its date four ones (IIII), which signifies "eleven hundred and eleven."

Mess Lethierry's popularity in Saint Sampson was the result of his success. Success gone, a void was the consequence. We are forced to believe that bad luck is contagious, and that unfortunate people have the plague, so speedily are they quarantined. The hand-

some sons of good families avoided Déruchette. The isolation around the Bravées was now such that they had not even heard about the great local event which had stirred all Saint Sampson that day. The rector of the parish, the Reverend Joe Ebenezer Caudray, was rich. His uncle, the great Dean of Saint Asaph, had just died in London. The news had been brought by the mail-sloop *Cashmere*, which had arrived from England that morning, and whose mast could be seen in the harbor of Saint-Pierre-Port. The *Cashmere* was to leave for Southampton the next day at noon, and, it was rumored, would carry away the reverend rector, recalled to England in haste, to be present at the official opening of the will, not to mention the other exactions in connection with taking possession of a large inheritance. The whole day, Saint Sampson had l een agitated. The *Cashmere*, the Reverend Ebenezer, his dead uncle, his riches, his departure, his probable promotion in the future, had been the foundation of this gossip. One house, the Bravées, not having been informed, remained quiet.

Mess Lethierry had thrown himself into his hammock without undressing.

Throwing himself into his hammock had been his resource ever since the wreck of the Durande. Stretching himself out on his pallet

is something to which every prisoner has recourse, and Mess Lethierry was the prisoner of sorrow. He lay down; it was a truce, a breathing time, a suspension of thought. Was he sleeping? No. Awake? No. Properly speaking, for two months and a half,—two months and a half had elapsed since the catastrophe,—Mess Lethierry had been almost in a state of somnambulism. He had not yet recovered from the shock. He was in that dazed and confused state of mind which is common to those who have undergone great afflictions. His reflections were not thought, his sleep was not repose. During the day he was not fully awake, and during the night he was not asleep. He was up, and then he lay down, that was all the difference. When he was in his hammock forgetfulness came to his aid; he called that sleeping; chimeras filled his brain and floated about him; his mind was full of dark clouds in which were confused faces; the Emperor Napoleon dictated to him his memoirs; there were several Déruchettes; strange birds were in the trees, the streets of Lons-le-Saulnier became serpents. Nightmare was the respite from despair. He passed his nights in dreaming and his days in reverie.

He sometimes remained, for a whole afternoon, motionless at the window of his room, —which, as will be remembered, opened on

the port,—with his head bent, his elbows on the stone, his ears resting on his fists, his back turned to the whole world, his eyes fixed on the old iron ring fastened in the wall of his house, only a few feet from his window, to which the Durande had formerly been fastened. He watched the rust collect on that ring.

Mess Lethierry was reduced to the habit of living mechanically.

The bravest men, deprived of their hopes, come to this. It is the result of an existence rendered void. Life is the voyage, hope is the guide-book. With no guide-book one stops short. The goal is lost, strength is gone. Fate holds a secret discretionary power, the edge of which can even touch a moral being. Despair is almost the destitution of the soul. Great spirits alone resist it. And now let us resume our story.

Mess Lethierry was continually meditating,—if absorption can be called meditation,—at the base of a sort of precipice of trouble. Heart-broken words, like the following, escaped him: "Nothing remains for me to do but to ask the Most High for my return ticket."

Let us remark an incongruity in this nature, complex as the sea, of which Lethierry was, so to speak, the product: Mess Lethierry did not pray.

To be powerless is in itself a force. In the presence of the two great blind powers, Destiny and Nature, man, in his helplessness, has found his chief support in prayer.

Man takes counsel of his terror, he calls fear to his aid; anxiety induces him to kneel.

Prayer, that enormous force suited to the soul, is of a mysterious nature. Prayer addresses itself to the magnanimity of darkness; prayer looks upon mystery with the very eyes of the shadow, and we feel that before the powerful intensity of this fixed, supplicating look, the Unknown may be moved.

This possibility once realized is of itself a consolation.

But Lethierry did not pray.

When he was happy, God seemed to him to exist, one might almost say, in flesh and blood; Lethierry spoke to Him, pledged his word to Him, and, at times, seemed almost to grasp His hand. But in Lethierry's misfortune, God was eclipsed,—a not unfrequent phenomenon. This occurs when one has imagined God to be a good God, in the likeness of a good man.

In the state of mind in which Lethierry lived there was for him but one distinct vision, Déruchette's smile. Beyond that smile, all was dark.

For some time past, without doubt on ac-

count of the loss of the Durande, and of the reaction of the shock, this charming smile of Déruchette's came but rarely. She appeared preoccupied. Her pretty, bird-like, and childish ways had disappeared. Now she was never seen making a courtesy in the morning at the sound of the daybreak gun, and saying to the rising sun, "*Bum!* . . . *jour*" ("Come in, if you please"). At times she seemed very serious, a sad thing in this sweet nature. However, she made an effort to smile at Mess Lethierry, and to divert his attention, but her gayety decreased day by day, and became covered with dust like the wing of a butterfly with a pin through its body. Besides which, whether in consequence of the sorrow she felt for her uncle,—for there are reflected troubles,—or whether for other reasons, she now seemed much inclined toward religion. During the time of the former rector, Mr. Jaquemin Hérode, she scarcely went to church, as we know, more than four times a year. Now she attended regularly. She never missed a service, either on Sunday or on Thursday. The pious souls of the parish remarked this improvement with satisfaction. For it is a great blessing when a young girl, who runs so many dangers from men, turns to God.

This, at least, causes the poor parents to

feel more at ease with regard to love affairs.

In the evening, whenever the weather permitted, she walked an hour or two in the garden of the Bravées. There she was almost as pensive as Mess Lethierry, and always alone. Déruchette was the last to go to bed. This did not prevent Grace and Douce from always keeping an eye upon her, through that instinct of spying peculiar to servants—spying makes service less tedious.

As for Mess Lethierry, in the abstracted condition of his mind, these little alterations in Déruchette's habits escaped him. Besides, he was not a born duenna. He had not even remarked the regularity of Déruchette's attendance at the services of the parish church. Always tenacious in his prejudices against all that appertained to the clergy, he would have seen with little pleasure these frequent attendances at church.

It was not that his own moral condition was not changing. Sorrow is a cloud, and changes its form.

Strong natures, as we have just remarked, are at times almost overpowered by strokes of misfortune. Manly characters, like that of Lethierry, react after a time. Despair has its upward steps. From extreme dejection one mounts to despondency; from despondency,

to affliction; from affliction, to melancholy. Melancholy is a dim light. Then suffering melts into a sombre joy.

Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad.

This sad sequence was not within Lethierry's comprehension; neither the nature of his temperament nor the character of his unhappiness admitted of these shades. But, at the moment when we return to him, the reverie of his first despair had been tending to disperse for a week past; without being less sad, Lethierry was less inert; he was always gloomy, but no longer dejected; a certain perception of facts and events was returning to him; and he commenced to experience something of that strange feeling which might be called a return to reality.

During the day he remained in the lower hall, and although he did not listen to the words spoken around him, he heard them. One morning Grace came, quite triumphant, to tell Déruchette that Mess Lethierry had undone the wrapper of a newspaper.

This half acceptance of realities is in itself a good symptom, a token of convalescence. Great misfortunes stun. It is in this way that one emerges from them. But this amelioration first produces an aggravation of the trouble. The previous state of dreaminess softened the sorrow; one saw one's trouble,

but felt it little; now the vision is clear, one escapes nothing, one bleeds at everything. The wound becomes keen. The suffering becomes more intense, in consequence of one being able to perceive all the details. Memory recalls everything. To recollect all, is to regret all. There is every variety of bitter after-taste in this return to reality. One feels better, and, at the same time, worse. This is what Lethierry experienced. His sufferings were more distinct.

It was a shock which had restored Mess Lethierry to a sense of reality.

Let us describe what this shock was.

One afternoon, about the fifteenth or twentieth of April, the double knock, announcing the post-man, had been heard at the door of the lower hall of the Bravées. Douce had opened the door. It was, in fact, a letter.

This letter came from over the sea. It was addressed to Mess Lethierry, and was postmarked "Lisboa."

Douce had carried the letter to Mess Lethierry, who was shut in his room. He had taken it and placed it mechanically upon the table, without glancing at it.

This letter remained at least a week upon his table, with the seal unbroken.

But one morning it chanced that Douce said to Mess Lethierry:

"Sir, shall I remove the dust which lies on your letter?"

Lethierry appeared to arouse.

"All right," said he.

And he opened the letter.

He read the following:

AT SEA, March 10th.

MESS LETHIERRY, of Saint Sampson:

You will be glad to hear from me.

I am aboard the *Tamaulipas*, bound for "*Pas-revenir*" (no return). Among the crew there is a sailor named Ahier Tostevin, from Guernsey, who will return and relate many things to you. I avail myself of the opportunity of our having spoken the ship *Hernan Cortez*, bound for Lisbon, to send you this letter.

You will be astonished to know that I am an honest man. As honest as Sieur Clubin.

I ought to believe that you know what has occurred; nevertheless, it may not be superfluous for me to inform you. It is this: I have returned you your money.

I borrowed from you, somewhat irregularly, fifty thousand francs. Before leaving Saint Malo, I placed in the hands of your confidential agent, Sieur Clubin, three bank-notes of a thousand pounds each, making seventy-five thousand francs. You will, no doubt, find this reimbursement sufficient.

Sieur Clubin took your interest and received your money with alacrity. He appeared to me to be very zealous, which is my reason for notifying you.

Your other confidential agent,

RANTAINE.

Postscript.—Sieur Clubin had a revolver, and this explains why I have no receipt.

Touch a torpedo, touch a Leyden jar charged with electricity, and you will experience what Mess Lethierry felt on reading this letter.

Within that envelope, on that sheet of paper folded in four, to which he had just paid so little attention, there was a revelation.

He recognized the handwriting, he recognized the signature. As for the substance, he did not, at first, comprehend it at all.

It was so agitating that it awakened his faculties, so to speak.

The peculiar occurrence of the seventy-five thousand francs having been confided to Clubin, being an enigma, made the shock useful, in so much that it forced Lethierry's brain to work. Conjecture is a healthy occupation for the mind. Reason is awakened, logic is called forth.

For some time public opinion in Guernsey had been occupied in re-judging Clubin,—this honest man who was for so many years so unanimously regarded in the esteem of the people. They now began to question and to have their doubts; bets were made for and against. Singular lights had been thrown on the subject. Lights had been thrown on Clubin's conduct which made it look black.

There had been a judicial inquiry at Saint Malo to ascertain what had become of the

coast-guard 619. Legal perspicacity had, as usual, taken a wrong course. A part of this supposition was that the coast-guard had been led off by Zuela, and had sailed for Chili on board the *Tamaulipas*. This ingenious hypothesis was wrong in many respects. Short-sighted justice had not even perceived Rantaine. But, during the investigation, the examining magistrates had found other clues. This obscure affair had become complicated. Clubin had become a part of the enigma. A coincidence, perhaps a connection, was established between the sailing of the *Tamaulipas* and the loss of the Durande. Clubin had been recognized at the wine-shop of the Dinan port, where he had thought himself unknown; the tavern-keeper had talked: Clubin had bought a bottle of brandy. For whom? The gunsmith of Saint Vincent street had talked: Clubin had purchased a revolver. For whom? The inn-keeper of l'Auberge Jean had talked: Clubin had been unaccountably absent. Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau had talked: Clubin had insisted upon leaving, although warned, and knowing that he would meet a great fog. The crew of the Durande had talked: in fact, the vessel had not sufficient cargo, and the stowage had been badly arranged—negligence easy to understand if the captain wished to wreck the vessel. The Guernsey passenger

had talked: Clubin had thought that he was wrecked on the Hanois. The people of Torteval had talked: Clubin had been there a few days before the loss of the Durande, and had gone toward Plainmont, close to the Hanois. He carried a valise. "He took it away with him and returned without it." The birds'-nest hunters had talked; their story seemed to be connected with Clubin's disappearance, with the exception that smugglers must be substituted for ghosts. Lastly, the haunted house at Plainmont, itself, had borne evidence; some people, being determined to investigate the matter, had climbed into the interior, and had found—what? the identical valise which belonged to Clubin. The Douzaine of Torteval had taken possession of the bag, and had had it opened. It contained provisions, a telescope, a chronometer, men's clothing, and linen marked with Clubin's initials. All this, in the opinion of Saint Malo and of Guernsey, seemed more and more like a case of barratry. Scattered facts were brought together; and proved a singular disregard of advice, a willingness to encounter the dangers of the fog, a suspicious negligence in regard to the stowage, a bottle of brandy, a drunken helmsman, a substitution of the captain himself for the helmsman, a movement of the tiller, which, to say the

least, was very unskilful. The heroism of remaining on the wreck had the appearance of roguery. Besides, Clubin had mistaken the rock. The intention of barratry being admitted, one could understand the choice of the Hanois, because the coast could be easily reached by swimming, and a sojourn could be made in the haunted house while waiting for the opportunity of escape. The valise, placed there in case of need, completed the proof. It could not as yet be ascertained by what link this circumstance was connected with the other fact—that of the disappearance of the coast-guard. Some connection was suspected, that was all. In regard to that man, the guard number 619, a whole tragic drama could be unfolded. Perhaps Clubin had not taken part in it, but he could be perceived behind the scenes.

Barratry did not explain everything. The purpose of the revolver had not been discovered. This revolver probably belonged to the other affair.

Public sentiment is keen and true. Public instinct excels in extracting the truth from scattered facts. Only, in these facts in which barratry was so evident, serious doubts existed.

Everything was consistent, everything was correct; but the base was lacking.

A vessel is not wrecked for the mere pleasure of wrecking it. No one runs all the risks of the fog, of the rocks, of swimming, concealment, and flight, without an incentive. What could have been Clubin's incentive?

His act was seen, but not his motive.

Hence arose a doubt in many minds. It seems as though there could be no action without a motive.

The gap was wide.

This gap the letter of Rantaine had just filled.

This letter gave Clubin's motive, which was to steal seventy-five thousand francs.

Rantaine was the god in this affair. He descended from the cloud holding a candle in his hand.

His letter furnished the final gleam of light.

It explained everything, and for additional proof it mentioned the testimony of Ahier Tostevin.

It decided one thing: it showed how the revolver was used. Rantaine was certainly well informed. His letter brought all the facts within easy reach.

There were no possible extenuating circumstances in connection with Clubin's rascality. He had prearranged the shipwreck, the proof of which was the bag carried to the haunted house. And even supposing him to be inno-

cent, admitting the wreck to be accidental, ought he not, at the last moment,—having decided to sacrifice himself on the wreck,—to have handed the seventy-five thousand francs for Mess Lethierry to the men who were escaping in the long-boat? The evidence was conclusive. Now, what had become of Clubin? He had probably been the victim of his mistake. He had, doubtless, perished on the Douvres rock.

This series of conjectures were, as can be readily seen, very near the truth, and occupied Mess Lethierry's mind for several days. Rantaine's letter was of service to him, inasmuch as it caused him to think. After the first shock of surprise he made an effort to think. He made a still more difficult effort to obtain information. He was obliged to hear and even to seek conversation. At the end of a week, he had, to a certain extent, become practical, his mind had become clearer, and was almost restored. He had emerged from his troubled state.

Rantaine's letter, even admitting that Mess Lethierry could ever have entertained any hope of reimbursement from this source, destroyed his last chance.

To the wreck of the Durande was added this new loss of seventy-five thousand francs. It put him in possession of that money just

long enough to feel its loss. This letter showed him the extent of his ruin.

Hence this new and very acute suffering which we have just described. He began—a thing which he had not done for two months—to take an interest in his house. What was to become of it? what changes would be necessary? Little annoyances with a thousand points, almost worse than despair. To endure misfortune in detail, to dispute, foot by foot, with an accomplished fact, the point you have just lost, is odious. Great misfortune can be borne, but not its fragments. In mass, it overwhelms; in detail, it tortures. The catastrophe which struck you like a thunderbolt now trifles with you.

It is humiliation aggravating the blow. It is a second and hideous addition to the first. One step nearer annihilation. After the shroud comes decay.

There is no sadder thought than to think of going down in the world.

It seems easy to be ruined. A violent shock, cruelty of fate, catastrophe once for all. So be it; you accept it. All is over. You are ruined. That is right; you are dead. Not at all. You are alive. The next day one perceives this. How so? By the pin-pricks. Such and such a person no longer bows to you in passing; the merchants shower their

bills upon you; yonder is one of your enemies, laughing. Perhaps he is laughing at Arnal's last joke; but, all the same, that pun only seems to him the more charming, because you are ruined. You read your own fall even in indifferent glances. Friends who used to dine at your table express the opinion that three courses were an extravagance; your defects are visible before the eyes of everybody; ingratitude, having nothing more to expect, proclaims itself; every fool has foreseen your misfortunes; the malignant pick you to pieces, the more malignant pity you. And then come a hundred paltry details. Nausea follows grief. You have drunk wine; you must now drink cider. Two servants! That is one too many. This one must be discharged, and that one be made to work harder. You have too many flowers in your gardens; you must plant potatoes. You have been accustomed to give fruit to your friends; you must now have it sold in the market. As for the poor, they are no longer to be thought of. Are you not poor yourself? Dress: a painful question. To deprive a woman of a ribbon; what torture! To refuse an ornament to her who gives you her beauty! To seem like a miser! Perhaps she will say to you: "What! you have taken away the flowers of my garden, and now you are taking them from my bonnet!" Alas! to

condemn her to faded gowns! The family table is silent. You imagine that those around you are angry with you. Loved faces are careworn. This is what coming down in the world means. It means dying every day.

To be ruined is nothing; it is the furnace. To go down in the world is a slow fire.

The crash is a Waterloo; a slow descent is Saint Helena. Fate incarnated in Wellington still retains some dignity; but how sordid is it in the shape of Hudson Lowe! Destiny becomes a contemptible nonentity. One sees the hero of Campo-Formio quarreling about a pair of silk stockings. The humbling of Napoleon, who humbled England. Every ruined man experiences these two phases, Waterloo and Saint Helena, reduced to smaller proportions.

On the evening we have mentioned, which was one of the first evenings in May, Lethierry went to bed sadder than ever, leaving Déruchette walking in the garden by moonlight.

All these petty and unpleasant details, complications of lost fortunes—all these trifling cares which are at first unnoticed and are afterward harassing, were revolving in his mind. A disagreeable accumulation of misfortunes. Mess Lethierry felt his fall to be irremediable. What was to be done? What was to become of them? What sacrifices must he ask of Déruchette? Which of the two should he

dismiss, Grace or Douce? Should the Bravées be sold? Would they not be reduced to leaving the island? To be nothing where one has been everything is, in fact, an insupportable downfall.

And to think that all was over! To recall those voyages between France and the Archipelago, those Tuesdays of sailing, those Fridays of return, the crowd upon the wharf, those large cargoes, that industry, that prosperity, that direct and superior navigation, that engine which obeyed man's will, that all-powerful boiler, that smoke—the entire vessel! The steamboat is the completion of the mariner's compass; the compass indicates the direct path, the steamboat follows it. The one guides, the other obeys. Where was that Durande, that magnificent and majestic Durande, that mistress of the sea, that queen who had made him king? To have been the enterprising man of his native land, the successful man, the man who revolutionized navigation! To renounce this! To abdicate! To be of no account! To become a laughing-stock! To be an empty sack which once had been filled! To belong to the past when he had represented the future! To be an object of haughty pity to fools! To witness the triumph of routine, obstinacy, conservatism, egotism, and ignorance! To witness the stupid revival of the

Gothic coasters, and to see them coming and going, the sport of the waves! To see the old methods used again! To have wasted his whole life! To have been a light and to suffer eclipse! Ah! how beautiful, upon the waves, had been that huge smoke-stack, that prodigious cylinder, that column with a capital of smoke, that column grander than the column Vendôme, for upon one there is only a man, while upon the other was progress! The ocean had been subdued. It was safety upon the open sea. This had all been witnessed in this little island, in this little port, in this little Saint Sampson! Yes, it had been seen. What! it had been seen, and it will never be seen again!

All these regrets tortured Lethierry. There are sobs of thought. Perhaps he had never felt his loss more bitterly. A certain stupor follows these acute attacks. Beneath this weight of sadness he fell into a doze.

He remained for about two hours with closed eyelids, sleeping a little, thinking much, and feverish. These stupors hide an obscure labor of the brain which is inexpressibly wearying. Toward the middle of the night, toward midnight, a little earlier or later, he shook off this drowsiness. He awoke, he opened his eyes; his window was directly in front of his hammock, and he saw a strange sight.

A form was before his window—a most extraordinary form—the smoke-stack of a steamboat. Mess Lethierry started and sat upright. The hammock swayed as if in a tempest. Lethierry gazed. A vision appeared before the window. The port, flooded with moonlight, was framed in the window-panes, and against this brightness, quite near to the house, appeared in bold relief, round and black, a superb silhouette.

The smoke-stack of an engine was there.

Lethierry sprang out of his hammock, ran to the window, raised the sash, leaned out, and recognized it.

The smoke-stack of the Durande was before him.

It was in its old place.

Its four chains held it fast to the edge of the boat, in which, beneath it, could be distinguished a confused mass.

Lethierry drew back, turned away from the window, and dropped into his seat in the hammock.

He turned round again, and again beheld the vision.

A moment later, as quick as lightning, he was on the wharf, with a lantern in his hand.

To the old mooring-ring of the Durande was fastened a boat-earing; a little toward the stern, a massive block, from which issued the

straight smoke-stack directly before the window of the Bravées. The bow of the boat extended beyond the corner of the wall of the house, on a level with the wharf.

There was no one on board the bark.

This boat was of a peculiar form, one which every Guernseyite could have described. It was the Dutch sloop.

Lethierry jumped into it. He ran to the mass which he saw beyond the mast. It was the engine.

There it was, entire, complete, uninjured, squarely placed upon its iron flooring. The boiler was entire, the axle of the paddle-wheels stood erect, and was fastened near the boiler; the salt-water pump was in its place; nothing was missing.

Lethierry examined the machinery; the lantern and the moon together lighted him.

He went over every part of its mechanism.

He saw the two cases which were at the sides.

He examined the axle of the wheels. He entered the cabin. It was empty.

He returned to the engine, touched it, and then, kneeling, thrust his head into the boiler, so that he could look within it.

He placed his lantern in the furnace, the light from which illuminated all the machinery and almost produced the effect of a lighted engine.

Then he laughed aloud, and, standing up, with his eyes fixed on the engine and with his arms stretched out toward the funnel, he cried: "Help!"

The bell of the port was situated upon the wharf, but a few steps distant; he ran to it, seized the chain, and began to ring the bell furiously.

II.

ONCE MORE, THE BELL OF THE PORT

Gilliatt had, in fact, arrived at Saint Sampson after nightfall, somewhat nearer nine than ten o'clock, after a non-eventful trip, which was rather slow, owing to the weight of the load in the sloop.

He had calculated the hour. It was time for the half-flood. It was moonlight, and the water was high, so that he could enter the port.

The little harbor was asleep. A few vessels were anchored there, their sails brailed upon the yards, their tops fastened, and without lanterns. At the further end several fishing-boats, under repair, could be seen high and dry in the careenage. Great dismasted and scuttled hulls, lifting above their pierced planking the curving ends of their bare ribs, resembling dead beetles on their backs with their legs in the air.

As soon as Gilliatt had passed the narrow mouth of the harbor, he examined the port

and the wharf. There was no light to be seen, either at the Bravées or elsewhere. No one was passing, except, perhaps, a man who had just entered or left the parsonage. And even then one could not be sure it was anyone, because the night vaguely sketches all that it outlines, and the moonlight renders everything indistinct. Distance added to the obscurity. The parsonage was at that time situated on the other side of the port, where there is now a covered ship-yard.

Gilliatt had silently approached the Bravées, and had moored the sloop to the ring of the Durande, under Mess Lethierry's window.

Then he jumped over the side and landed.

Gilliatt left the sloop behind him at the wharf, and, turning the corner of the house, passed through one small street after another, and did not even look at the path which branched off toward the Bû de la Rue. After a few minutes he stopped at the corner of the wall, where wild mallows, with pink flowers, holly, ivy, and nettles bloomed in June. It was at this spot that, hidden under the brambles and seated on a stone, often on summer days, and for long hours and months together, he had gazed over the wall,—which was so low as to tempt one to jump over it into the garden of the Bravées,—and looked through the

branches of the trees at two windows belonging to a certain room in the house. He found his stone again, the brambles, the wall as low as ever, the corner as dark, and crawling in like a beast re-entering his den, creeping rather than walking, he hid himself there. When seated, he did not move. He only looked. Once more he saw the garden, the paths, the shrubs, the square flower beds, the house, the two windows of the chamber. The moon showed him this scene. To be obliged to dream seemed frightful. He tried not to do so.

He fancied that he beheld a phantom paradise. He was afraid that it would all vanish. It seemed almost impossible that these things could be really before his eyes; and if they were, it could only be with the impending danger of disappearing, which always pertains to things divine. A breath, and everything would be dispelled. Gilliatt trembled at the thought.

Almost immediately in front of him in the garden, at the side of the path, there was a wooden bench, painted green. The reader will remember this bench.

Gilliatt looked up at the two windows. He thought of someone possibly slumbering in this chamber. Behind that wall someone was sleeping. He wished himself elsewhere, yet

he would rather have died than leave. The thought of the gentle heaving of a breast in breathing. She, that mirage, that purity in a cloud, that floating vision of his mind, she was there! He thought of her, so inaccessible and yet so near, who was sleeping almost within reach of his ecstasy; he thought of the unattainable woman sleeping, and visited also by ideal fancies; of the wished-for creature, far away, who could not be had, with her eyes closed, and her hand on her head; of the mystery of the slumber of this ideal being; of the fancies possible to a dream. He dared not think beyond that, and yet he did; he ventured into almost disrespectful familiarity in his reverie. The knowledge of how much femininity was in that angelic form disturbed his thoughts,—the darkness of the night emboldens timid imaginations to take these furtive glances,—he was vexed with himself for going so far; feeling, on reflection, that it was profanity to think of her so boldly, forced, constrained, and quivering in spite of himself, he looked into the darkness. He felt the emotion, and almost the pain, of imagining a petticoat on a chair, a mantle thrown on the carpet, a belt unclasped, a neck-handkerchief. He imagined a pair of corsets, a corset-lace dragging on the ground, stocking and garters. His soul was amid the stars.

Stars are made as much for the heart of a poor man as for the heart of a millionaire. In a certain degree of passion, every man is subject to great fascinations. If his be a wild and primitive nature this is all the more true. An uncultivated mind is the most susceptible to reverie.

The fullness of rapture overflows like anything else. The sight of those windows was almost too much for Gilliatt.

Suddenly, he saw her, herself.

Through the branches of a clump of bushes, already rendered more dense by the spring, there came forth, with an inexpressible, spectral, and celestial slowness, a figure, a dress, a divine face, which was radiant in the moonlight.

Gilliatt felt himself grow weak. It was Déruchette.

Déruchette approached; she paused. She retraced a few of her steps, paused again, then returned and seated herself on the wooden bench. The moonlight shone through the trees, a few clouds floated among the pale stars, the sea murmured to the shadows, the town was asleep, a mist was rising from the horizon, the melancholy was profound. Déruchette bent her head with that thoughtful glance which gazes steadfastly at nothing; she was seated so that only her profile was visible,

and bareheaded, except for a cap, which was untied, and showed where the hair commenced to grow on the back of the fair neck, she rolled a string of her cap mechanically around one of her fingers, the subdued light modeled her hands like those of a statue, her dress was of one of those shades which seem white at night, the trees swayed as though they felt the enchantment which surrounded her, the tip of one of her feet could be seen, her lowered eyelids had that vague contraction which suggests an unshed tear or a suppressed thought, her arms had that delightful uncertainty of not knowing where to rest themselves, a floating grace mingled with her every gesture, she was rather a glimmer than a light, rather one of the Graces than a goddess, the folds at the bottom of her skirt were exquisite, her adorable face was wrapt in virgin meditation. It was terrible to think how near she was. Gilliatt could hear her breathe.

In the distance a nightingale was singing. The stirring of the wind among the branches set in motion the ineffable silence of the night. Déruchette, beautiful and pure, appeared, in this dim light, like the outcome of these rays and perfumes; this great and pervading charm seemed to be concentrated and embodied mysteriously in her, and blossomed forth. She seemed the soul-flower of all this shadow.

All this shadow hovering about Déruchette weighed upon Gilliatt. He was bewildered. What he felt was beyond expression ; emotion is always new, and the word has always been used ; hence the impossibility of expressing emotion. Rapture is overwhelming. To see Déruchette, to see her, herself, to see her dress, her cap, the ribbon which she was twirling around her finger,—can such a thing be imagined? Was it possible that he was near her? he heard her breathe,—so she did breathe! then the stars breathe. Gilliatt trembled. He was the most miserable and also the most elated of men. He did not know what to do. He was overcome by the delirium of seeing her. What! was she really there, was he really here! His thoughts, bewildered and fascinated, rested on this creature as upon a jewel. He gazed at the back of her neck and her hair. He did not even say to himself that all was now his, that before long, perhaps tomorrow, he would have the right to take off the cap, to untie the ribbon. He would not for a moment have conceived the audacity of thinking so far. To touch in thought is almost the same as to touch with the hand! Love was to Gilliatt what honey is to the bear, an exquisite and delicate dream. He thought confusedly. He did not know what possessed him. The nightingale was

singing. He felt as though he were about to expire.

To rise, jump over the wall, to approach, to say, "It is I," to speak to Déruchette, this idea never occurred to him; if so, he would have fled. If anything like a thought penetrated his mind, it was this, that Déruchette was there, that he needed nothing more, and that this was the beginning of eternity.

A noise attracted the attention of both, arousing her from her reverie, and him from his ecstasy.

Someone was walking in the garden. They could not see who it was, on account of the trees. The footstep was that of a man.

Déruchette raised her eyes.

The steps drew nearer, then ceased. The person who had been walking had stopped. He must be very near. The path in which the bench was situated was hidden between two bushes. The person was there, in this passage, a few steps from the bench.

Chance had so arranged the branching foliage that Déruchette could see, while Gilliatt could not.

The moon cast a shadow on the ground, from the bushes to the bench.

Gilliatt saw the shadow.

He looked at Déruchette.

She was very pale. A cry of surprise

escaped her parted lips. She had half arisen from the bench, and had sunk back upon it. There was a mixture of fright and fascination in her attitude. Her astonishment consisted of enchantment mingled with fear. Upon her lips was almost the brightness of a smile, and in her eyes, suppressed tears. She appeared to be transfigured by a presence. It did not seem as though the being whom she beheld could be of this earth. His face had the inspired look of an angel.

The person, who only appeared as a shadow to Gilliatt, spoke. A voice issued from the bushes, softer than the voice of a woman, and yet it was the voice of a man. Gilliatt heard these words:

"Mademoiselle, I see you every Sunday and Thursday. I have been told that formerly you did not come so often. It is a remark which has been made, and I beg your pardon. I have never spoken to you, it was my duty to be silent; to-day I speak to you, it is my duty to speak. It is right that I speak to you first. The *Cashmere* sails to-morrow. This is why I am here. Every evening you walk in your garden. It would be wrong for me to observe your habits if I did not feel toward you as I do. Mademoiselle, you are poor; since this morning, I am rich. Will you have me for your husband?"

Déruchette clasped her hands like a suppliant, and looked at the man who was speaking to her, silent, with steadfast gaze, trembling from head to foot.

The voice continued:

"I love you. God has not made the heart of man to be silent. Since God promises eternity, it is because he does not wish that man shall be alone. There is, for me, but one woman upon earth, and that is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope is in you. What wings I have, you wear. You are my life, and already my heaven."

"Sir," said Déruchette, "there is no one in the house to answer you."

The voice spoke again:

"I have cherished this sweet dream. God does not forbid dreams. You affect me like a halo. I love you passionately, mademoiselle. You are holy innocence. I know that this is the hour when everyone is asleep, but I had no choice of any other moment. Do you remember the passage of the Bible which was read to us? The twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis. I have often thought of it since. I have often read it since. The Reverend Hérode said to me, 'You need a rich wife.' I replied, 'No, I need a poor wife.' Mademoiselle, I speak to you without approaching

you. I will even retreat further, if you prefer that my shadow shall not touch your feet. It shall be as you desire; you will come to me if you wish; I love you, and I wait. You are the living form of benediction."

"Monsieur," stammered Déruchette, "I did not know that I was noticed on Sundays and Thursdays."

The voice continued:

"One is powerless in the presence of angelic things. The law is to love. Marriage is Canaan. You are the promised blessing. Oh, graceful one, I salute you!"

Déruchette replied:

"I did not think I was doing any more harm than other persons who were in regular attendance."

The voice proceeded:

"God manifests His will in the flowers, in the dawn, in the spring; it is His will that we should love. You are beautiful in this sacred shadow of the night. This garden has been cultivated by you, and in its perfumes there is something of your breath. Mademoiselle, the blending of souls does not depend upon themselves. It is not our fault. You were present, nothing more; I was there, nothing more. I have done nothing but to feel that I loved you. Sometimes my eyes have rested on you. It was wrong of me, but what could

I do? It was in looking at you that it all happened. I could not help it. There are mysterious forces which are beyond our control. The first of temples is the heart. To have your spirit in my house would be to obtain this paradise to which I aspire. Do you consent to it? While I was poor, I said nothing. I know your age. You are twenty-one, I am twenty-six. I leave to-morrow. If you refuse, I shall not return. Be my betrothed, will you? My eyes have already, more than once, in spite of myself, asked yours this question. I love you; answer me. I will speak to your uncle as soon as he can receive me, but I address myself first to you. It is to Rebecca that one pleads for Rebecca. Unless, indeed, you do not love me."

Déruchette bent her head and murmured:

"Oh, I adore him!"

This was spoken so low that only Gilliatt heard it.

She remained with bowed head, as if the shadow which concealed her face would hide her thoughts.

A pause followed. The leaves of the trees did not stir. It was that solemn and peaceful moment when the slumber of nature is added to the sleep of creatures, and when night seems to listen to the pulsing of nature's heart. In this stillness there arose, like a

harmony-completing silence, the immense murmur of the sea.

The voice recommenced:

"Mademoiselle?"

Déruchette started.

The voice continued:

"Alas! I am waiting."

"For what are you waiting?"

"For your reply."

"God has heard it," said Déruchette.

Then the voice became almost sonorous, and at the same time softer than ever. These words came from out of the thicket, as from a burning bush.

"Thou art my betrothed. Arise and come to me. May the blue heaven, where the stars shine, be present at this acceptance of my soul by thy soul, and may our first kiss mingle with the firmament!"

Déruchette arose, and stood, for a moment, motionless, looking fixedly before her, doubtless into another's eyes. Then, with slow steps, head erect, arms drooping, and outspread fingers, as when one treads upon uncertain ground, she directed her steps toward the thicket and disappeared.

A moment later, instead of one shadow on the gravel path, there were two, their shadows mingled, and Gilliatt saw at his feet these two shadows embracing each other.

In certain supreme moments time passes as rapidly as sand from an hour-glass, and we are unconscious of its flight. On one side were these two, who did not see this witness or know of his presence; on the other side, this witness who did not see them, but who knew that they were there. How many minutes did they remain in this mysterious suspense. It would be impossible to say. Suddenly, a distant sound burst forth, a voice shouted, "Help!" and the bell of the port rang. It is probable that this sound was not heard by these lovers, who were absorbed by their ecstatic and celestial happiness.

The bell continued to ring. Anyone who would have looked for Gilliatt at the corner of the wall would not have found him there.

BOOK TWO

GRATITUDE IN FULL SWAY

I.

JOY MINGLED WITH ANGUISH

Mess Lethierry rang the bell violently. Suddenly, he stopped. A man had just turned the corner of the wharf. It was Gilliatt.

Mess Lethierry ran to him, or rather threw himself upon him, seized his hand between his own, and gazed for a moment into his eyes in silence—one of those silences which accompany suppressed emotion.

Then, violently shaking and pulling him, and pressing him in his arms, he made Gilliatt enter the lower hall of the Bravées, and, pushing-to with his heel the door which had remained half open, he sat, or rather fell, into a chair alongside of a large table lighted by the moon, the reflection from which shed a vague pallor over Gilliatt's face, and in a voice of mingled laughter and sobs he cried:

"Ah, my son! the man with the bagpipe! Gilliatt! I was sure that it was you! The sloop! Zounds! tell me about it. You really went there! A hundred years ago you would have

been burned for this. It is magic. There is not a screw wanting. I have already examined everything, recognized everything, handled everything. I suppose that the paddle-wheels are in the two cases. And so you are here at last! I have just looked for you in your cabin. I rang the bell. I was looking for you. I said to myself, 'Where is he, that I may embrace him?' One must acknowledge that strange things happen. This fellow returns from the Douvres rock. He brings me back my life. Thunder! you are an angel. Yes, yes, yes; it is my engine. No one will believe it. People will see it. They will say, 'It cannot be true.' Everything is there! What! everything is there! Not even the thread of a screw is wanting; not even a winding-pipe is lacking. The pipe for supplying the water is still in its place. It is incredible that everything should have escaped injury. It only needs a little oiling. But, how did you do it? And to think that the Durande will go again! The axle of the wheels is dismounted as though by a jeweler. Give me your word of honor that I am not mad."

He stood erect, took breath, and continued:

"Swear it to me! What a revolution! I pinch myself. I feel, indeed, that I do not dream. You are my child; you are my son; you are my deliverer. Ah, my son! That

you have gone in search of my poor old engine for me! In the open sea! Among those treacherous rocks! I have seen some very strange things in my life, but nothing to compare with this. I have seen Parisians who were veritable satans; but, I tell you, they would never have done this. It is worse than the Bastile. I have seen the *gauchos* working in the pampas with a crooked branch of a tree for a plough, and a bundle of thorns, drawn together with a leather strap, for a harrow, and with these they harvest grains of wheat as large as hazelnuts. But these are trifles compared with what you have done. You have performed a miracle, a genuine one. Ah, you rogue! Throw yourself in my arms. And to you the whole prosperity of the country will be due. How the people of Saint Sampson will grumble! I shall immediately set to work to build the boat. It is astonishing that there is nothing broken about the connecting-rod. Gentlemen, he has been to the Douvres —I say, the Douvres. He went entirely alone. The Douvres! No rock could be more dangerous. Do you know? have you heard? it has been proven that it was done intentionally. Clubin wrecked the Durande, so that he might swindle me out of the money which he had in trust for me. It was he who made Tangrouille drunk. It is a long story. I will tell you

about this piracy another day. I, stupid brute, I had confidence in Clubin. He was caught in his own trap, the rascal, for he could not get away. There is a God, wretch! Do you see, Gilliatt! immediately, quick, quick, we will have our irons in the fire and rebuild the Durande! We will make her twenty feet longer. Boats are now being made longer. I will buy timber at Dantzig and Bremen. Now that I have the engine, I can obtain credit. Confidence will return."

Mess Lethierry paused, raised his eyes with that look which sees heaven through the roof, and muttered between his teeth: "There is a God above."

Then he placed the middle finger of his right hand between his two eyebrows, the nail resting on the top of his nose, which indicates the passage of a project through the mind, and continued:

"Even so, to begin again on a grand scale, a little ready money would have been useful. Ah! if I only had my three bank-notes, my seventy-five thousand francs, which that robber Rantaine returned, and which that robber Clubin has stolen."

Gilliatt silently felt in his pocket and drew forth something which he placed before him. It was the leather belt which he had brought back. He unfastened it, and spread the belt

upon the table, on the inside of which, by the light of the moon, the word "Clubin" could be deciphered. Hé then took out, from the small pocket in the belt, a box, and out of the box, three pieces of folded paper, which he unfolded and offered to Mess Lethierry.

Mess Lethierry examined the three pieces of paper. There was light enough to see distinctly the number "1000," and the word "thousand." Mess Lethierry took the three notes and, placing them on the table alongside of each other, looked at them, then at Gilliatt, remained speechless for a moment, and then recommenced like an eruption after an explosion:

"These, also! You are a prodigy. My bank-notes! all three! a thousand each! my seventy-five thousand francs! Have you, then, penetrated even into hell? This is Clubin's belt. To be sure! I read his filthy name upon it. Gilliatt brings back the engine, and also the money! This will be something to put in the papers. I shall purchase timber of the first quality. I imagine you have found his body. Clubin rotting in some corner. We will procure the pine at Dantzig and the oak at Bremen. We will make a good planking, putting the oak on the inside and the pine on the outside. Formerly, vessels were not built so well, but they lasted longer; that

was because the wood was better seasoned, and also because fewer vessels were built. Perhaps we may make the hull of elm. Elm is good for the portions under water; it rots timber to be sometimes dry and at other times wet. Elm should be always wet; water preserves it. What a beautiful Durande we will plan! No one shall dictate terms to me. I shall now have no need to ask credit. I have the money. Has ever anyone been seen like this Gilliatt! I was prostrate, depressed, dead. He stands me on my feet again! And I was not thinking of him at all! He had escaped my mind. Now, it all comes back to me. Poor fellow! Ah! by the way, you know you are to marry Déruchette?"

Gilliatt leaned his back against the wall, like one who staggers, and said in a very low but distinct voice:

"No."

Mess Lethierry started.

"What, no!"

Gilliatt replied:

"I do not love her."

Mess Lethierry went to the window, opened it, and then closed it, returned to the table, took the three bank-notes, folded them, placed the iron box upon them, scratched his head, seized Clubin's belt, thrust it violently against the wall, and said:

"There is something strange about this."

He thrust his fists into his pockets, and continued:

"You do not love Déruchette? So it was for me, then, that you played the bagpipe?"

Gilliatt, who was still leaning against the wall, turned deathly pale. In proportion as he became pale, Mess Lethierry grew red.

"Here is an imbecile! He does not love Déruchette! Well, make up your mind to love her, for she shall marry no one but you. What devil of a story are you telling me? Perhaps you think that I believe it? Are you ill? Very well; send for the doctor, but do not talk nonsense. It is not possible that you should already have had time to quarrel and become angry with her. It is true that lovers are proverbially stupid! Let us see, have you any reasons? If you have any, tell them. One does not make a fool of one's self without a reason. But I have cotton in my ears. Perhaps I have not heard correctly; repeat what you have just said."

Gilliatt replied:

"I have said, No."

"You have said, No! He holds to it, the brute! Something is the matter with you, that is certain. You said, No! Here is stupidity which surpasses everything. Men are ducked for less than this. Ah, you do not love Déru-

chette! Then it was for the love of the old man that you have done all this! It was for papa's beautiful eyes that you went to the Douvres, that you endured cold, that you suffered from the heat, that you nearly died of hunger and thirst, that you ate the vermin of the rocks, that you had fog, rain, and wind for your bed-room, and that you accomplished the task of bringing me back my engine as one brings back to a pretty woman her canary bird which had escaped. And the tempest of three days ago! Do you imagine that I did not notice it. You have undergone difficulties. With your heart in your mouth, it was for my old head that you hewed, cut, turned, twisted, dragged, filed, sawed, built, invented, planned, and performed more miracles, unaided, than all the saints of Paradise.

"Ah, idiot! however, you have wearied me often enough with your bagpipe. It is called 'biniou' in Brittany. Always the same tune, simpleton! Ah, you do not love Déruchette! I do not know what is the matter with you. Now I remember it all. I was there in the corner. Déruchette said: 'I will marry him.' And she shall marry you! Ah, you do not love her! After reflecting, I do not understand it in the least. Either you are mad or I am. And, behold! he does not say another word. A man cannot be

permitted to do all that you have done, and then say, 'I do not love Déruchette.' One does not render service to another to put him in a passion. Well, if you do not marry her, she shall remain single. In the first place, I need you myself; you shall be the pilot of the Durande. Do you imagine that I will let you go like that? Tut, tut, tut! no, indeed, my heart, I will not let you go! I have you here. I will not even listen to you. Where is there a sailor like you? You are the man for me. But, then, speak!"

Meanwhile the bell had aroused the household and the neighborhood.

Grace and Douce had risen and had just entered the lower hall, with a stupefied look and without uttering a word. Grace held a candle in her hand. A group of neighbors, townspeople, sailors, and peasants came out in haste and stood outside on the wharf staring with blank amazement at the smoke-stack of the Durande in the sloop. Some of them, hearing Mess Lethierry's voice in the lower hall, began to slip in silently through the half-open door. Between the faces of two gossips was thrust the head of Sieur Landoys, who was always lucky enough to be where he would have regretted not to have been.

People ask nothing better than to have others witness their great joys. The rather

scattered support which a crowd always gives pleases them. They start anew. Mess Lethierry suddenly perceived that there were people around him. He welcomed the audience at once.

"Ah, here you are, my friends! It is very fortunate. You know the news? This man has been there and he has brought it back. Good-day, Sieur Landoys! Just now, when I awoke, I espied the smoke-stack. It was under my window. Not a nail of it is missing. People make engravings of Napoleon, but, as for me, I prefer this to the battle of Austerlitz. You leave your beds, good people. The Durande comes to you while you are asleep. While you are putting on your night-caps and blowing out your candles, others are doing heroic deeds. There are multitudes of cowards and loafers, who nurse their rheumatism, but happily that does not prevent other men from being brave. These brave men go where it is necessary to go, and do what has to be done. The man of Bû de la Rue has just returned from the Douvres rock. He has fished up the Durande from the bottom of the sea; he has fished up the money from Clubin's pocket, which was even deeper. But how did you do it? You had the very devil against you—the wind and the tide, the tide and the wind. It is true that

you are a sorcerer. People who believe in them are not so stupid, after all. The Durande has come back! Tempests may now rage in vain; this will pass through them. My friends, I announce to you that there will be no more shipwrecks. I have examined the machinery. It is as good as new, perfect. What! the steam-valves work as though on rollers. One would suppose them to have been made yesterday morning. You know that the waste-water from the engine is conducted from the sloop by a tube placed inside another tube, through which passes the water which enters the boiler to be converted into steam. Well, these two tubes are there. In fact, all the engine; the wheels also. Ah, you shall marry her!"

"Marry whom? the engine?" asked Sieur Landoys.

"No, the girl—yes, the engine—both! He shall be doubly my son-in-law. He shall be the captain. Good-day, Captain Gilliatt! He shall have a ship—the Durande! Business will be transacted, trading and commerce will be promoted, and the loading of oxen and sheep! I would not exchange Saint Sampson for London. And here is the author. I tell you that it is an event. It will be read on Saturday in Father Mauger's *Gazette*. Gilliatt the clever is a magician. What are these gold pieces?"

Mess Lethierry had just observed, through a crack in the cover, that in the box there was gold, which had been placed on top of the bank-notes. He took it, opened it, and emptied it into the palm of his hand, and placed the handful of guineas on the table.

"For the poor. Sieur Landoys, give these pounds, in my name, to the constable of Saint Sampson. You remember Rantaine's letter? I showed it to you. Well, I have the bank-notes. This money will purchase oak and pine and pay for the carpentry. Think a moment. Do you remember the weather three days ago? What a devastating wind and rain! The sky fired its cannon. Gilliatt endured all that in the Douvres. But that did not prevent him from unhooking the wreck, as I unhook my watch. Thanks to him, I am once more somebody. Ladies and gentlemen, Father Lethierry's galliot will resume its service. A nutshell with two wheels and a smoke-stack. I have always been infatuated with that invention. I have always said to myself, 'I will make one.' That dates a long way back; it is an idea which occurred to me in Paris, at a café at the corner of Christine and Dauphine streets, while reading a paper which referred to the subject. Do you know that Gilliatt could easily put Marley's engine in his pocket and walk off with it? That man is of wrought-

iron, of tempered steel, a diamond, an invaluable sailor, a blacksmith, and an unusually determined fellow, more surprising than the Prince of Hohenlohe. I call him a man of brains. We are all insignificant. The sea-wolves—meaning you, myself, all of us. But the sea-lion, behold him! Hurrah, Gilliatt! I do not know what he has done, but certainly he has had the power of a devil, and how could one wish me to do otherwise than to give him Déruchette?"

Déruchette had been in the room for some moments. She had not said a word; she had not made a sound. She had entered like a shadow. She had seated herself, almost unperceived, on a chair behind Mess Lethierry, as he stood there, loquacious, agitated, joyful, talking loudly, and using many gestures. Shortly after her, another mute apparition had entered. A man dressed in black, with a white necktie, holding his hat in his hand, had stopped in the opening of the door, which was ajar. There were now several candles in the group, which had slowly increased in number. These candles shed their light upon the man in black, and outlined his young, charming, and pale profile against the dark background, with the purity of a medallion; he rested his elbow on the corner of a panel of the door and held his forehead in his left

hand, an unconsciously graceful attitude, which showed the size of his forehead in contrast to the smallness of his hand. There was an expression of pain at the corners of his contracted lips. He scrutinized and listened with the greatest attention. Those present, having recognized the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray, rector of the parish, had separated to let him pass, but he preferred to remain at the threshold. There was hesitation in his attitude and decision in his glance. This glance sometimes met that of Déruchette's. As for Gilliatt, whether by chance or on purpose, he was in the shadow, and only indistinctly visible.

At first, Mess Lethierry did not perceive Mr. Ebenezer, but he saw Déruchette. He went to her and embraced her with all the enthusiasm that a kiss on the forehead can contain. At the same time he extended his arm toward the dark corner where Gilllatt stood.

"Déruchette," said he, "you are rich, and here is your husband."

Déruchette raised her head in bewilderment and looked into the darkness.

Mess Lethierry continued:

"The wedding will take place immediately —to-morrow, if possible; there will be an especial dispensation; besides, the formalities here are not burdensome; the dean does as he pleases, and one is married before one has

had time to cry, Beware! It is not as it is in France, where bans and publication, delays, and all sorts of nonsense are necessary, and you can boast of being the wife of a worthy man, and nothing can be said against him, for he is a true sailor. I had this opinion of him from the first day when I saw him returning from Herm with the little cannon. Now he returns from the Douvres with his fortune and mine and the fortune of the country; he is a man who will one day become very famous; you have said, 'I will marry him;' you shall marry him, and you will have children, and I shall be a grandfather, and you will have the good fortune of being the wife of a noble fellow, who works, who is useful, who has ideas, who is worth a hundred others, who saves the inventions of others, who is a godsend, and you at least, like nearly all the rich, proud damsels of this country, will not have married a soldier or a priest—that is to say, a man who kills or a man who lies. But what are you doing in the corner, Gilliatt? No one can see you. Douce! Grace! anyone! bring some light! Let light, like daylight, shine upon my son-in-law. I betroth you, my children, and here is your husband and my son-in-law, Gilliatt, of Bû de la Rue, the noble fellow, the great sailor, and I will have no other son-in-law, and you shall have no

other husband. I pledge my word of honor again to the good God. Ah, there you are, curate! you can marry these young people for me."

Mess Lethierry's eyes had just fallen on the Reverend Ebenezer.

Douce and Grace had obeyed. Two candles placed upon the table illuminated Gilliatt from head to foot.

"How handsome he is," cried Lethierry.

Gilliatt was hideous.

He was in the same condition in which he had that morning left the Douvres rock—in rags, out at elbows, with long beard, bristling hair, eyes red and bloodshot, the skin peeling off his face, bleeding hands, and bare feet. Some of the pustules made by the devil-fish were still visible on his hairy arms.

Lethierry contemplated him.

"He is my true son-in-law. How he has fought with the sea! He is all in rags! What shoulders! What hands! How handsome you are!" Grace ran to Déruchette and held her head. Déruchette had just fainted.

II.

THE LEATHER TRUNK

Saint Sampson was stirring at daybreak, and people from Saint-Pierre-Port began to arrive. The resurrection of the Durande caused a commotion in the island like that made by the *Salette* in the South of France. A crowd had assembled on the wharf to gaze at the smoke-stack projecting from the sloop. The people would have liked to look at and touch the engine, but Lethierry, after having again made a triumphant inspection of the machinery by daylight, placed two sailors in the sloop with instructions to forbid anyone to enter it. The smoke-stack, however, was sufficient to look at. The crowd wondered. Nothing was talked about but Gilliatt; his surname of "Malin" was commented upon and accepted as appropriate. Admiration culminated in this expression: "It is not always agreeable to have people in the island capable of doing things like this."

From outside, Mess Lethierry could be seen

seated at his table before his window, writing, with one eye on the paper, the other on the engine. He was so absorbed that he only stopped once to call Douce to inquire after Déruchette: "Mademoiselle has arisen, and has gone out." Mess Lethierry then said: "She has done well to take the air. She felt slightly ill last night on account of the heat. There were so many people in the room. And the surprise, the joy,—and, besides, the windows were shut. She will have a brave husband." And he began to write. He had already signed and sealed two letters addressed to the best-known timber-merchants of Bremen. He had just sealed the third.

The sound of a wheel on the wharf caused him to raise his head. He leaned out of the window, and saw a boy pushing a wheelbarrow out of the path which led to Bû de la Rue. This boy was going in the direction of Saint-Pierre-Port. In the wheelbarrow was a yellow trunk ornamented with copper and tin nails.

Mess Lethierry hailed the boy.

"Where are you going, boy?"

The boy stopped and replied:

"To the *Cashmere*."

"What for?"

"To take this trunk."

"Well, you can also take these three letters."

Mess Lethierry opened his table-drawer, took out a piece of string, tied together and knotted the three letters which he had just written, and threw the package to the boy, who caught it in his hands.

"Tell the captain of the *Cashmere* that it is I who have written them, and that he is to take good care of them. They are to go to Germany—Bremen via London."

"I shall not be able to speak to the captain, Mess Lethierry."

"Why not?"

"The *Cashmere* is not at the wharf."

"Ah!"

"She is in the roads."

"That is so. On account of the heavy sea."

"I can only speak to the boatman."

"You will, then, entrust my letters to his care?"

"Yes, Mess Lethierry."

"At what time does the *Cashmere* sail?"

"At twelve o'clock."

"At noon to-day the tide rises. The tide will be against her."

"But she will have the wind with her."

"Boy," said Mess Lethierry, pointing to the smoke-stack of the engine, "do you see that? that laughs at wind and tide."

The boy put the letters in his pocket, grasped the handles of the wheelbarrow, and

resumed his way toward the town. Mess Lethierry called:

"Douce! Grace!"

Grace half opened the door.

"Mess, what is it?"

"Come in and wait a moment."

Mess Lethierry took a sheet of paper and began to write. If Grace, who was standing behind him, had been curious enough to have leaned her head forward while he was writing, she could have looked over his shoulder and have read these words:

"I have written to Bremen for timber. All day I have appointments with carpenters for their estimates. The rebuilding will proceed quickly. You, on your part, go to the dean, and procure the license. I wish the marriage to take place as soon as possible. Immediately would be best. I am busy with the Durande; occupy yourself with Déruchette."

This he dated and signed "LETHIERRY."

He did not take the trouble to seal the note, but simply folded it in four and handed it to Grace.

"Take this to Gilliatt."

"To the Bû de la Rue?"

"To the Bû de la Rue."

BOOK THREE

DEPARTURE OF THE "CASHMERE."

I.

THE HAVELET QUITE NEAR TO THE CHURCH

There cannot be a crowd at Saint Sampson without Saint-Pierre-Port being deserted. An unusual occurrence at any given point has the effect of a suction-pump. News flies quickly in small places; to go and look at the smoke-stack of the Durande under Mess Lethierry's window had been the great occupation of Guernsey ever since sunrise. Every other event was eclipsed by this. The death of the dean of Saint Asaph was no longer mentioned; there was no more conversation about the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray, nor about his sudden riches, nor his departure by the *Cashmere*. The engine of the Durande rescued from the Douvres—such was the order of the day. People were incredulous. The shipwreck had seemed extraordinary, but the rescue appeared impossible. Everyone wished to see it for himself. All business was suspended. Long lines of townspeople with their families, from the "vésin" to the "mess,"

men and women, gentlemen, mothers with children, and children with dolls, were coming by every road toward "the thing to be seen" at the Bravées, and turned their backs on Saint-Pierre-Port. Many of the shops in Saint-Pierre-Port were closed; in the commercial Arcade there was absolute stagnation in buying and selling. Everyone's attention was completely absorbed by the Durande; not a merchant had "sold anything," except one jeweler, who, much to his surprise, had sold a gold wedding-ring to "a sort of man who appeared to be in great haste, and who had asked him where the dean lived." The shops which remained open were centres of gossip, where the people noisily discussed the miraculous rescue. Not a promenader on the Hyvreuse, which is now called—no one knows why—Cambridge Park; there was no one in High street, which was then called Grand Rue; nor in Smith street, which was then called rue des Forges; no one remained in Hauteville; even the Esplanade itself was deserted. It had the appearance of Sunday. A royal personage on a visit, reviewing the militia at Ancresse, would not have called away a greater number of the inhabitants. And all this disturbance on account of a nonentity like this Gilliatt, caused grave men and conservative people to shrug their shoulders.

The church of Saint-Pierre-Port, with its triple gable-ends placed in juxtaposition to the transept and steeple, is situated at the water's-edge at the end of the port, almost on the pier itself. It bids welcome to those who arrive, and adieu to those who depart. This church is the capital letter of the long line of buildings which form the town-front on the ocean.

It is both the parish of Saint-Pierre-Port and the deanery of the whole island. Its officiating priest is the surrogate of the bishop, a clergyman with full orders.

The harbor of Saint-Pierre-Port, a very fine and large port at the present day, was, at that period, and even up to ten years ago, less important than the harbor of Saint Sampson. There were two large Cyclopean walls, which, on leaving the river front, curved to the starboard and port, and joined again at their extremities, where there was a little white lighthouse. Under this lighthouse was a narrow entrance, through which ships passed; this entrance still had the double ring of the chain which closed it during the middle ages. Imagine the half-open claw of a lobster, and you can form an idea of the harbor of Saint-Pierre-Port. These claws took a little of the water from the ocean, and kept it calm; but when there was an east wind, waves rolled through

the narrow opening, and then it was not wise to enter, as the port had a choppy sea. This is what had happened to the *Cashmere* that day, and she had, therefore, anchored in the roads.

When there was an east wind, vessels preferred this course, which had the advantage of saving them from the port dues. On these occasions boatmen commissioned by the town—a brave set of sailors, which the new port had thrown out of employment—came with their boats to the wharf or the stations on the beach to get the passengers, and transport them and their baggage, often through very heavy seas, and always without accident, to the vessel about to sail. The east wind is a coast wind, very favorable for crossing to England; the vessel then rolls, but does not pitch.

When the out-going vessel was in port, everyone embarked from the port; when it was in the roads, one had the choice of embarking from any point of the coast near the mooring. In every inlet boatmen could be found "at command."

Havelet was one of these inlets. This little harbor, Havelet, was quite near the town, but so lonely that it seemed very far away. This solitude was owing to its being surrounded by the high cliffs of Fort George, which overlooked this retired inlet. Several paths led to the Havelet. The most direct bordered on the

water; it possessed the advantage of being within five minutes' walk of the town and the church, and the disadvantage of being covered by the sea twice a day. The other paths, more or less abrupt, passed through the crevices of the rock. The Havelet, even in broad daylight, was in a half-shadow. Overhanging rocks projected from every side. Thick brambles and underbrush shed a sort of twilight over this confusion of rocks and waves; no place could be more peaceful than this inlet in calm weather, no place more tumultuous in heavy seas. Ends of some of the branches there were always wet with the spray. In the spring it was full of flowers, nests, perfumes, birds, butterflies, and bees. Thanks to modern improvements, these wild places no longer exist; they have been replaced by beautiful, straight lines; buildings, wharves, little gardens, and terraces have become popular; taste has done justice to the peculiar formation of the mountain and the irregularities of the rocks.

II.

DESPAIR IN THE PRESENCE OF DESPAIR

It was a little before ten o'clock in the morning—"a quarter before," as it is called in Guernsey.

The crowd seemed to be increasing at Saint Sampson.

The people with feverish curiosity thronged to the northern part of the island, leaving the Havelet, which is in the southern part, more deserted than ever.

Nevertheless, a boat and a boatman could be seen there. A traveling-bag was in the boat, and the boatman seemed to be waiting for someone.

Lying at anchor in the roads was the *Cashmere*, but as it was not to start until noon, no preparations for departure were as yet visible.

Anyone who might have been passing along the stepping-stones of the cliff would have heard, had he listened, a murmur of words in the Havelet, and, if he had leaned over the

overhanging cliffs in his path, he would have seen, at some distance from the boat, in a corner among the rocks and branches, beyond the reach of the boatman's eye, two persons, a man and a woman, Ebenezer and Déruchette.

These obscure nooks on the sea-coast, which tempt maidens to bathe, are not always so solitary as they are supposed to be. People are sometimes seen there and their conversation overheard.

Those who seek refuge and shelter in this place can be easily followed through the thick bushes, thanks to the multiplicity and intricacy of the paths. The rocks and trees which hide the stolen interview can also conceal a witness.

Déruchette and Ebenezer were standing face to face, with their eyes fixed on each other; they were clasping each other's hands; Déruchette was speaking. Ebenezer was silent. A tear which had gathered paused between his eyelashes, rested there, and did not fall.

Grief and passion were imprinted on Ebenezer's saintly brow. A painful resignation was also there—a resignation hostile to faith, although springing from it. On this face, which, until then, had appeared simply devout, could be seen the beginning of a careworn expression. He who had hitherto meditated only on doctrinal points, began to think of destiny,

—an unhealthy meditation for a priest. Faith is destroyed by it. Nothing is more trying than to bend beneath the weight of the unknown. Man suffers from the course of events. Life is a perpetual succession of them; we submit. We never know from what side fate will suddenly descend upon us. Catastrophes and joyful events come and go like unexpected personages. They have their own law, their orbit, their gravitation, beyond man's control. Virtue does not bring happiness, crime does not bring unhappiness. Conscience has one logic, fate has another. They do not coincide with each other. Nothing can be foreseen. We live in confusion — shock upon shock. Conscience is the straight line, life is the whirlwind. This whirlwind unexpectedly throws upon the head of man black chaos and blue skies. Fate does not understand the art of gradation. Sometimes the wheel turns so quickly that man scarcely distinguishes the interval between one revolution and another, and the link between yesterday and to-day. Ebenezer was a believer whose faith was mingled with reason, and a priest who was capable of passion. Religions which impose celibacy do so with reason. Nothing undoes a priest so much as loving a woman. All sorts of clouds hovered darkly over Ebenezer.

He gazed at Déruchette too long.

These two people idolized each other.

The mute adoration of despair shone from Ebenezer's eyes.

Déruchette was saying:

"You must not go. I have not the courage to let you go. You see, I thought that I would be able to bid you farewell, but I cannot. One cannot make one's self able. Why did you come yesterday? You should not have come if you were going away. I have never spoken to you. I loved you, but I did not know it. Only that first day, when Mr. Hérode read the story of Rebecca, and your eyes met mine, I felt my cheeks on fire, and I thought, 'Oh, how Rebecca must have blushed!' It is all the same, if anyone had said to me before yesterday, 'You love the rector,' I should have laughed. The terrible thing about our love is, that it has seemed like deception. I did not suspect it. I attended church; I saw you. I thought that everyone was like myself. I do not reproach you; you have done nothing to make me love you; you took no trouble; you merely looked at me. It is not your fault if you look at people, and so it happened that I adored you. I did not imagine it. When you read the Bible, it seemed inspired; when others read it, it seemed only a book. Sometimes you turned

your eyes toward me. You spoke of archangels. You were the Archangel. Whatever you said, I at once believed. Before you came, I do not know whether I believed in God. Since your arrival, I have become a praying woman. I said to Douce, 'Dress me quickly, so that I will not miss the service,' and I hastened to church. So that is being in love with a man. I did not know it. I said to myself, 'How devout I am becoming!' It is you who have taught me that I did not go to church for the sake of the God Almighty. I went for your sake, that is true. You are handsome, you speak well; when you raised your arms to heaven, it seemed to me that you held my heart in your two white hands. I was foolish, but I did not know it. If you wish me to tell you your fault, it is this, that you entered the garden yesterday and spoke to me. If you had said nothing I should have known nothing. You would have gone. I should, perhaps, have felt sad, but now I shall die. Now that I know that I love you, it is no longer possible for you to go. What are you thinking of? You do not seem to listen to me."

Ebenezer replied:

"You heard what was said last night?"

"Alas!"

"What can I do?"

They remained silent for a moment, after which Ebenezer replied:

"There is but one thing for me to do—to leave."

"And for me—to die. Oh, how I wish that there was no sea! that there was only heaven! It seems to me that that would decide everything; our departure would then be for the same place. You should not have spoken to me. Why did you speak to me? Then do not go away. What will become of me? I tell you that I shall die. You will have gained much by your departure when you return and find me in the cemetery. Oh, my heart is broken! I am so unhappy. And yet my uncle is not unkind."

It was the first time in her life that Déruchette spoke of Mess Lethierry as "my uncle." Hitherto she had always said "my father."

Ebenezer retreated a step, and made a sign to the boatman. The sound of the boat-hook could be heard among the rocks, and also the step of the man on the edge of his boat.

"No, no!" cried Déruchette.

Ebenezer drew near to her again.

"It must be, Déruchette."

"No; never! For the sake of an engine! is it possible? Did you see that horrible man last night? You cannot abandon me. You are clever; you will find a way. It cannot

be that you told me to come and meet you here this morning, knowing that you would go away. I have done nothing to you. You have no reason to complain of me. Is it by this vessel that you wish to go? I am not willing. You shall not leave me. Heaven is not opened to be thus closed again. I tell you that you shall stay here. Besides, it is not yet time. Oh, I love you!"

And pressing closely to him, she interlaced the fingers of both hands behind his neck, as though to make with her encircling arms a bond for Ebenezer, and with her clasped hands a prayer to God.

He disentangled himself from this gentle embrace, though she clung to him as long as she could.

Déruchette sank down, seated herself on a projecting rock covered with ivy, and mechanically turned up the sleeve of her dress to the elbow, displaying her charming bare arm, and gazed at him with a subdued and pale light in her steadfast eyes. The boat was approaching.

Ebenezer took her head between his hands; this virgin had the appearance of a widow, and this young man looked like a grandfather. He touched her hair with a sort of religious reverence, looked at her for some moments, then placed on her forehead one of

those kisses beneath which it seems as though a star should come forth, and in a trembling accent of supreme anguish, in which could be heard the rending of the soul, he uttered this word—the word of profound sadness—"Farewell!"

Déruchette burst into tears.

At this moment they heard a slow and grave voice, saying:

"Why do you not marry?"

Ebenezer turned his head. Déruchette raised her eyes.

Gilliatt stood before them.

He had just entered the side path.

Gilliatt no longer appeared like the same man as on the previous evening. He had combed his hair, trimmed his beard, and put on shoes; he wore a sailor's white shirt with a broad, rolling collar, and was dressed in his best sailor-clothes. On his little finger was a gold ring. He appeared to be perfectly calm. There was a paleness beneath his sunburn.

A sickly hue lay beneath the bronze.

They stared at him in amazement. Although he was very much changed, Déruchette recognized him. As for the words which he had just uttered, they were so remote from what they were at that moment thinking about that their meaning escaped them.

Gilliatt repeated:

"What is the necessity of bidding each other farewell? Get married. You can then leave together."

Déruchette trembled. She trembled from head to foot.

Gilliatt continued:

"Miss Déruchette is of age. She is accountable to no one but herself. Her uncle is only her uncle. You love each other . . . "

Déruchette interrupted him gently:

"How comes it that you are here?"

"Get married," continued Gilliatt.

Déruchette began to understand what it was that this man was saying to her. She stammered:

"My poor uncle."

"If the marriage was about to take place, he would refuse his consent; but if it should be consummated, he would give his consent. Moreover, you are going away. When you return, he will pardon you."

Gilliatt continued with a shade of bitterness: "And then he thinks of nothing else but the rebuilding of his boat. He will be busy with that during your absence. The Durande will console him."

"I would not wish," stammered Déruchette, in a dazed way, through which gleamed a ray of joy, "to leave sorrow behind me."

"It will not last long," said Gilliatt.

Ebenezer and Déruchette had been, as it were, bewildered. They now recovered themselves. As their surprise diminished, the purport of Gilliatt's words became apparent to them. A shadow hovered over them, but it was not to their interest to resist. One yields readily to the advice of those who come to save one. Objections to a return to Eden are faintly made. In the attitude of Déruchette, who was imperceptibly leaning upon Ebenezer, there was something which pleaded with him to follow Gilliatt's words. As to the enigma of the presence of this man and the words he uttered, which, especially in Déruchette's mind, gave rise to varied astonishment, these were side issues. This man was saying to them, "Marry." This was evident. If there was any responsibility in the case, he was taking it. For several reasons, Déruchette had a confused idea that he had a right to do so. What he had said of Mess Lethierry was true. Ebenezer pensively murmured, "An uncle is not a father."

His resolution yielded to the corruption of this sudden and happy combination of events. The scruples of the priest probably melted and dissolved in this poor, loving heart.

Gilliatt's voice became curt and harsh, and

feverish pulsations could be distinctly heard in it.

"Be quick! The *Cashmere* will sail in two hours. You have time, but only time. Come!"

Ebenezer regarded him attentively.

Suddenly, he cried:

"I recognize you. You are the man who saved my life."

Gilliatt replied:

"I think not."

"Yonder, at the extremity of the 'Banques.'"

"I do not know the place."

"It happened on the very day I arrived."

"Let no time be lost," said Gilliatt.

"And, if I mistake not, you are the hero of last night?"

"Perhaps."

"What is your name."

Gilliatt raised his voice:

"Boatman, wait for us. We will return. Miss, you asked me how I happened to be here; the explanation is easily made. I followed you. In this country, when people are of age and accountable to no one, they can be married in a quarter of an hour. Let us take the shore path. It is practicable now, for the tide will not rise till noon. But make haste; come with me at once."

Déruchette and Ebenezer seemed to consult each other by a look. They were standing, motionless, side by side. They seemed to be dazed. There are such hesitations on the brink of the abyss of happiness. They understood, as it were, without comprehending.

"His name is Gilliatt," Déruchette whispered to Ebenezer.

Gilliatt continued with a tone of authority:

"What are you waiting for? I tell you to follow me."

"Where?" asked Ebenezer.

"Yonder."

And Gilliatt pointed to the church-steeple.

They followed him.

Gilliatt led the way. His step was firm, but they walked unsteadily.

As they approached the steeple there could be seen on the pure and beautiful faces of Ebenezer and Déruchette an expression which was about to break into a smile. As they came nearer to the church things seemed clearer to them. In the hollow eyes of Gilliatt was the darkness of night.

He might have been taken for a departed spirit leading two souls to paradise.

Ebenezer and Déruchette scarcely realized what was about to take place. The intervention of that man resembled the branch to which a drowning person clings. They fol-

lowed Gilliatt with the docility of despair, leaning on him, the first comer. One who feels that he is dying is not particular about accepting what help chance throws in his way. Déruchette, being the more ignorant, was the more confident. Ebenezer was thinking: Déruchette was of age. The formalities of English marriages are very simple, especially in primitive countries, where the rectors of the parish have almost discretionary power; but, nevertheless, would the dean consent to celebrate the marriage without even inquiring whether the uncle had given his consent? This was a question. However, one could try. In any event, it would be a respite.

But, who was this man? If, in fact, he was the man whom but the previous evening Mess Lethierry had proclaimed as his son-in-law, how could his present course of action be explained? He, from being the obstacle, had become their deliverer. Ebenezer yielded, but his yielding was only the rapid and tacit consent of one who feels himself saved.

The path was uneven, sometimes both wet and uneven. Ebenezer was so absorbed that he did not heed the pools of water and heaps of stones. From time to time Gilliatt turned back and said to Ebenezer:

"Look out for these stones; give her your hand."

III.

THE FORETHOUGHT OF SELF-SACRIFICE

It was striking half-past ten as they entered the church.

On account of the early hour, and also because the town was deserted on that day, the church was empty.

At the farther end, however, near the table which, in reformed churches, replaces the altar, were three persons—the dean, his assistant, and the recorder. The dean, who was the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, was seated; the assistant and the recorder were standing.

The open Bible was on the table.

Alongside, on the credence-table, was another open book, the parish register, in which an attentive eye would have observed a page freshly written, the ink of which was not yet dry. A pen and inkstand were near the register.

On seeing the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray enter, the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode arose.

"I have been waiting for you," said he. "All is ready."

The dean, in fact, wore his officiating robes.

Ebenezer looked at Gilliatt.

The reverend dean added:

"I am at your service, my colleague," and he bowed.

This bow was neither to the right nor to the left. It was evident, from the direction of the dean's glance, that it was to Ebenezer alone he bowed. Ebenezer was a clergyman and a gentleman. The dean did not include in his salutation either Déruchette, who was at his side, or Gilliatt, who stood behind. In his glance there was a parenthesis into which Ebenezer alone was admitted. The maintenance of these distinctions contributes to the good order and preservation of society.

The dean resumed, with a gracious and dignified urbanity:

"My colleague, I offer you my double congratulations. Your uncle is dead, and you are about to take a wife. One makes you rich and the other makes you happy. Besides, now, thanks to this steamboat which is about to be rebuilt, Miss Lethierry is also rich, of which I approve. Miss Lethierry was born in this parish. I have verified the date of her birth on the register. Miss Lethierry is of age and is her own mistress. Besides, her uncle,

who is all the family she has, consents. You wish to be married at once, on account of your departure, that I understand; but in this marriage, being that of a rector of the parish, I would have preferred more formality. I will make it short as a favor to you. The essentials may be condensed. The record is already made out on the register here, and only the names remain to be filled in. According to the requirements of law and custom, the marriage can be celebrated immediately after signing the record. The requisite declaration for the license has been duly made. I make myself responsible for a slight irregularity, as the demand for a license should have been registered seven days in advance; but I yield to the necessity and urgency of your departure. So be it. I will now marry you. My assistant will be the witness for the bridegroom; as to the witness on the part of the bride . . . "

The dean turned toward Gilliatt.

Gilliatt nodded.

" That is sufficient," said the dean.

Ebenezer remained motionless. Déruchette seemed in a dream.

The dean continued:

" Now, however, there is still an obstacle."

Déruchette started.

The dean proceeded:

"Mess Lethierry's representative, here present, applied for your license and signed the declaration on the register,"—and with the thumb of his left hand the dean designated Gilliatt, which made it unnecessary for him to pronounce that name. "This messenger from Mess Lethierry told me this morning that Mess Lethierry was too busy to attend in person, but that he desired that the marriage should take place immediately. This desire, verbally expressed, is not sufficient. I am unable, on account of the licenses to be granted and the irregularity I am assuming, to proceed so rapidly, without inquiring myself of Mess Lethierry, or, at least, unless I am shown his signature. However much I may wish to oblige you, I cannot feel satisfied with a message which is repeated to me. I must have something in writing."

"That need not delay us," said Gilliatt.

And he presented a paper to the reverend dean.

The dean seized the paper, glanced over it, seemed to pass over several lines, which were, no doubt, unimportant, and read aloud:

"... Go to the dean and procure the license. I wish the marriage to take place as soon as possible. Immediately would be best."

He placed the paper on the table and continued:

"Signed, 'LETHIERRY.' It would have been more respectful if addressed to me. But as it is for a colleague, I ask nothing more."

Ebenezer looked again at Gilliatt. There are moments when minds comprehend each other. Ebenezer felt that there was some deception; he had not the courage to denounce it, or, perhaps, he never thought of doing so. Whether in obedience to a latent heroism which he perceived, or whether because his conscience was stunned by this thunder-clap of happiness, he remained silent.

The dean took the pen, and, with the aid of the assistant, filled in the blanks of the page written in the register, then he arose, and, with a gesture, invited Ebenezer and Déruchette to approach the table.

The ceremony commenced.

It was a strange moment.

Ebenezer and Déruchette stood, side by side, in front of the minister.

Anyone who has had a dream, in which he was married, has felt what they experienced.

Gilliatt stood at some distance from them, in the shadow of the pillars.

When Déruchette arose that morning, being in despair, thinking only of the coffin and the shroud, she had dressed herself in white. This

attire, which had been associated with the idea of mourning, was appropriate for the wedding. A white robe indicates a bride. The tomb is also a betrothal.

Déruchette was radiant. Never had she been what she was at that moment. Déruchette was, perhaps, too pretty and not sufficiently beautiful. Her beauty was lessened, if such a thing can be, by excessive grace. Déruchette, in repose, that is to say, uninfluenced by passion or sorrow, was, as we have especially mentioned, very pretty. The transfiguration of the charming girl is the ideal virgin. Déruchette, expanded by love and suffering, had, if we may be allowed the expression, made this advancement. She possessed the same frankness, together with more dignity; the same freshness, with more perfume. It was as though a daisy should become a lily.

The moisture of tears scarcely dry was on her cheeks. A tear, perhaps, still lingered in the corner of her smile. Traces of tears, indistinctly visible, are a sad and sweet ornament to happiness.

The dean stood near the table, placed a finger on the open Bible, and asked in a loud voice:

"Is there any objection?"

No one replied.

"Amen!" said the dean.

Ebenezer and Déruchette advanced a step toward the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode.

The dean said:

"Joë Ebenezer Caudray, wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife?"

Ebenezer replied:

"I will."

The dean then said:

"Durande Déruchette Lethierry, wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband?"

Déruchette, her soul overflowing with too much joy, as the lamp overflows when too full of oil, murmured, rather than said:

"I will."

Then followed the beautiful Anglican marriage service; the dean looked around him, and, in the dim light of the church, put this solemn question:

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"

"I do," said Gilliatt.

There was a pause. Ebenezer and Déruchette felt an indefinable oppression through their happiness.

The dean placed Déruchette's right hand in Ebenezer's right hand, and Ebenezer said to Déruchette:

"Déruchette, I take thee to my wedded wife, for better, for worse, for richer, for

poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The dean placed Ebenezer's right hand in Déruchette's right hand, and Déruchette said to Ebenezer:

"Ebenezer, I take thee to my wedded husband, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to obey, till death us do part, and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The dean asked:

"Where is the ring?"

This was unforeseen. Ebenezer, taken by surprise, had no ring.

Gilliatt took off the gold ring which he wore on his little finger and presented it to the dean. This was probably the wedding-ring purchased that morning from the jeweler in the commercial arcade.

The dean placed the ring on the Bible, and then gave it to Ebenezer.

Ebenezer took Déruchette's small, trembling left hand, slipped the ring on her fourth finger, and said:

"With this ring I thee wed."

"In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," said the dean.

"Amen!" said the assistant.

The dean then raised his voice:

"I pronounce you man and wife."

"Amen!" said the assistant.

The dean continued:

"Let us pray."

Ebenezer and Déruchette turned toward the table and knelt.

Gilliatt, who remained standing, bent his head.

They knelt before God, he bowed beneath fate.

IV.

"FOR YOUR WIFE WHEN YOU MARRY"

On leaving the church, they saw the *Cashmere* preparing to sail.

"You are in time," said Gilliatt.

They again took the path to the Havelet.

They went in front; Gilliatt now walked behind.

They seemed like two somnambulists. They had, so to speak, only changed the form of their bewilderment. They neither knew where they were, nor what they were doing; they hastened mechanically, remembering the existence of nothing beside themselves; they had not two consecutive ideas. In ecstasy, it is as impossible to think as to swim in a torrent. From the midst of despair they had fallen suddenly into a Niagara of joy. One might say that they were experiencing paradise. They did not speak to each other, because their souls were in such perfect harmony that speech was unnecessary. Déruchette pressed Ebenezer's arm closely.

The steps of Gilliatt, behind them, occasionally reminded them that he was there. They were profoundly moved, but said not a word; excess of emotion stuns. Theirs was delightful, but overwhelming. They were married. Every other thought was subservient to this, that they would see each other again, what Gilliatt had done was good, and that was all they comprehended of it. In the depths of their hearts they thanked him ardently and vaguely. Déruchette said to herself that there was some mystery to be explained to her later. Meanwhile, they accepted everything. They felt themselves controlled by this abrupt and decided man, who, as one in authority, had arranged for their happiness. It was impossible to question him or talk with him. Too many impressions overwhelmed them at once. Their absorption was pardonable.

Events are sometimes like hail. They strike one, they deafen one. Sudden incidents happening to those whose lives are habitually calm, soon renders events unintelligible to such as suffer from them or profit by them. One does not understand one's own experiences. One is crushed without knowing it. One is crowned with joy without comprehending it. Déruchette, especially, had for some hours past experienced every sort of emotion; at first she had been dazzled by

Ebenezer in the garden; then the nightmare, that monster having been declared her husband; then desolation, the angel opening his wings and preparing to leave; now all was joy, an indescribable joy, of incalculable depth; the monster giving the angel to her, Déruchette; the marriage following the anguish; this Gilliatt, the evil destiny of last night, the deliverer of to-day. She could understand nothing. It was evident that, since early morning, Gilliatt's only occupation had been to arrange for their marriage. He had done everything; he had answered for Mess Lethierry, seen the dean, obtained the license, and signed the required declaration; this made it possible for the marriage to take place. But Déruchette did not understand it, and even had she understood how it was done, she could not have comprehended the reason for it.

She had only to close her eyes, to give thanks in her heart, to forget the earth and life, and to allow herself to be carried to heaven by this good demon. An explanation would have been too long, and thanks would have been insufficient. The sweet ecstasy of happiness made her silent.

They still retained a little sense, enough to find their way. Portions of the sponge remain white under water. They possessed just

enough sense to distinguish the sea from the land, and the *Cashmere* from any other vessel.

In a few minutes they had reached the Havelet.

Ebenezer entered the boat first. At the moment when Déruchette was about to follow him, she felt her sleeve gently touched. It was Gilliatt, who had placed a finger on a fold of her dress.

"Madam," he said, "you were not expecting to leave. It has occurred to me that perhaps you would need dresses and linen. On board the *Cashmere* you will find a trunk containing woman's clothing. This trunk was given to me by my mother. It was intended for the woman I should marry. Permit me to offer it to you."

Déruchette half awoke from her dream. She turned toward Gilliatt. Gilliatt, in a low voice, which was scarcely audible, continued:

"I do not wish to detain you now, but you see, madam, I think I owe you some explanation. On the day on which the disaster took place you were sitting in the lower hall; you said something. It is natural that you should not remember it. One is not obliged to remember every word one has uttered. Mess Lethierry was in great trouble. It certainly was a good and useful vessel. It had been wrecked; there was great excitement through-

out the land. These things have naturally been forgotten. This was not the only vessel which had been wrecked on rocks. One cannot remember an accident forever. Only, what I wish to say to you is this, when it was said that no one will go, I went. It was said to be an impossibility; but it was not that which was impossible. I thank you for listening to me for a moment. You understand, madam, that when I went there, it was not for the purpose of offending you. Besides, this happened some time ago. I know that you are in haste. If there was time to converse one could recall everything, but that would be useless. It dates from one day when there was snow. And then once, as I passed, I thought that you smiled. That is the explanation. As to last night I had not had time to go home, I had just come from my work, I was all ragged, I frightened you, you were ill, I was in the wrong, one should not go in that condition to people's houses. I beg you, however, not to be angry with me for it. This is nearly everything I wished to say to you. You are about to take your departure. You will have fine weather. The wind is from the east. Farewell, madam. You think it right, do you not, that I should say a few words? This is a final moment."

"I am thinking of that trunk," said Déru-

chette. "But why not keep it for your wife, when you marry?"

"Madam," said Gilliatt, "I shall probably never marry."

"That will be a pity, for you are good. Thank you."

And Déruchette smiled. Gilliatt returned her smile.

Then he helped Déruchette into the boat.

In less than a quarter of an hour the boat containing Ebenezer and Déruchette came alongside the *Cashmere* in the roads.

V.

THE GREAT TOMB

Gilliatt followed the water's-edge, passing rapidly through Saint-Pierre-Port, and then walked toward Saint Sampson, along the sea-shore, shunning everyone, and avoiding the roads, which, owing to his achievement, were full of people.

For a long time, as we know, he had had a peculiar manner of traversing the country in every direction without being observed. He knew the by-paths, and had made for himself lonely and winding routes; he had the wild habits of a being who feels that he is not loved; he held aloof. When quite a child, seeing but little kind feeling in the faces of men, he had formed this habit of being alone, which had since become an instinct.

He passed through the Esplanade, then the Salerie. From time to time he turned and looked behind him at the *Cashmere* in the roads, which had just set sail. There was but little wind. Gilliatt went faster than the

Cashmere. He walked, with bowed head, along the rocks on the extreme edge of the water. The tide was beginning to rise.

At a certain moment he stopped, and, turning his back to the sea, gazed for several minutes at a clump of oak trees beyond the rocks, which hid the road to Valle. They were the oaks at the place called "Basses Maisons." There, formerly, the finger of Déruchette had written his name, "Gilliatt," on the snow under these trees. That snow had melted long ago.

He pursued his way.

The day was more charming than any thus far that year. This morning seemed like a bridal morn. It was one of those luxurious spring days in May, when creation seems to have no higher aim than to hold high holiday and to enjoy its own beauty. Beneath all the sounds of the forest as well as of the village, beneath the murmur of the wave, as well as in the air, there was a cooing sound. The first butterflies were alighting on the earliest roses. Everything in nature was fresh—the grasses, the mosses, the leaves, the perfumes, the sunshine. It seemed as though the sun had never shone before. The stones were freshly washed. The wonderful song of the trees was sung by newly-fledged birds. Probably, the egg-shell broken by their little beaks could still be

found in the nest. The motion of their wings caused a rustling in the trembling branches. They were singing their first song, taking their first flight. There was a sweet harmony in nature,—hoopoos, tomtits, woodpeckers, goldfinches, bullfinches, sparrows, and missels. Lilacs, lilies of the valley, daphnes, and wistaria formed an exquisite coloring in the thickets. A very pretty duckweed, peculiar to Guernsey, covered the marshes with a cloth of emerald. The wagtails and the woodpeckers, which make such pretty little nests, were bathing there. Through every opening in the trees the blue heavens could be seen. Some stray clouds chased each other in the sky, with the undulating motion of nymphs. Kisses could be imagined, wafted from invisible mouths. Not an old wall but had its bouquet of gilly-flowers, like a bridegroom. The thorned plum-tree was in blossom; the laburnum was in bloom, these white and yellow clusters, which shone and sparkled, could be seen through the interlacing branches. The spring showered all its silver and gold into the immense basket of the foliage. All the new shoots were of a fresh green. Cries of greeting were heard in the air. The hospitable summer welcomed the birds from afar. It was the time for the arrival of the swallows. Clusters of furze bordered the banks of the sunken

roads, while waiting for the blossoming of the hawthorn. The beautiful and the pretty harmonize well; the superb found its complement in the graceful; the large did not crowd the small; no harmonious note was lost; microscopic magnificence held its place in the universal beauty; everything could be as distinctly seen as though in the clear water. Everywhere a divine abundance and a mysterious swelling suggested the rapid mounting of the sap. That which shone, shone more; that which loved, loved better. There was something of a hymn in the flowers, and of transport in the sounds of nature. The widely-diffused harmony of nature burst forth. When plants commence to bud, that stimulates their growth. An impulse which came from below, and which also came from above, vaguely moved the heart of nature, which is susceptible to the scattered and subterranean influence of germination. The flower gave a vague promise of fruit to come, every maiden meditated the reproduction of beings, instigated by the immense soul of shadows roughly sketched in the irradiation of everything. Betrothal was all-pervading. Immeasurable marriages. Life, which is the female, mates with the infinite, which is the male. The weather was beautiful; it was bright and warm; through the hedges, joyous children

could be seen in the enclosures. Some were playing hopscotch. Apple-trees, peach-trees, cherry-trees, and pear-trees covered the orchards with their pale or crimson blossoms. In the grass were primroses, periwinkles, yarrows, daisies, daffodils, hyacinths, violets, and speedwell. The blue borages and yellow iris clustered with these little rosy stars, which always flower in groups, and which, for this reason, are called "companions." Golden-colored insects crept between the stones. Flowering house-leeks empurpled the thatched roofs. The toilers of the hives were outside. The bees were at work. The air was full of the murmuring of the sea, and of the buzzing of flies. Nature, permeated with the spring, was luxuriously moist.

When Gilliatt reached Saint Sampson the water had not yet risen at the lower end of the harbor, and he could cross dry-shod, unperceived, behind the hulls of the vessels undergoing repair. A row of flat stones which were placed there at intervals made this passage easier.

Gilliatt was not noticed. The crowd was at the other end of the harbor, near the entrance to the Bravées. There his name was in every mouth. The people were speaking about him so much that no one observed him. Gilliatt passed by, overlooked in some

degree in consequence of the commotion which he had caused.

He saw, from afar, the sloop in the place in which he had moored it, with the smoke-stack of the engine between its four chains; there was a stir, as of carpenters at work; indistinct forms were coming and going, and he also heard the penetrating and joyful voice of Mess Lethierry giving orders.

He rushed into the by-ways.

There was no one in the rear of the Bravées. All curiosity was concentrated in the front. Gilliatt took the path which skirted the low wall of the garden. He paused at the corner where the wild mallow grew; he saw, once more, the stone upon which he had seated himself; he saw, once more, the wooden bench where Déruchette had been seated. He looked at the pathway, where he had seen two shadows embrace and disappear.

Then he continued his way. He climbed the hill of the Castle of Valle, then descended, and directed his steps to Bû de la Rue.

The Houmet-Paradis was deserted.

This house had remained just as he had left it that morning, after dressing himself to go to Saint-Pierre-Port.

A window was open. Through this window the bagpipe could be seen hanging to a naïl in the wall.

On the table could be seen the small Bible which had been given, in gratitude, to Gilliatt by a stranger, who was Ebenezer.

The key was in the door. Gilliatt approached, placed his hand upon the key, double-locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and walked away.

He went, not in the direction of the land, but toward the sea.

He crossed his garden diagonally, by the shortest way, paying no attention to the flower-beds, but taking care not to crush the sea-kale, which he had planted because it was a favorite with Déruchette.

He jumped over the parapet, upon the rocks.

He began to follow the long, narrow line of rocks which stretched out before him, and connected the Bû de la Rue with that large obelisk of granite, standing far out at sea, which is called the "*Corne de la Bête*" (Horn of the Beast). It was there that the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur was situated.

He leaped from one rock to another, like a giant on the peaks of mountains. Taking such strides on the crest of the breakers is like taking a walk on the ridge of a roof.

A fisherwoman with hoop-nets, who was wandering, bare-footed, in some pools of water a short distance away, and who was just coming

ashore, called to him: "Take care, the tide is rising."

He continued to advance.

On reaching this large rock at the point,—the "Corne," which rose like a pinnacle out of the sea,—he stopped. The land ended there. It was the extremity of the little promontory.

He looked about him.

Out at sea a few boats were anchored, fishing. From time to time, alongside of these boats, could be seen dripping silver streams in the sunlight, which indicated that the nets were being drawn up out of the water. The *Cashmere* had not yet arrived opposite Saint Sampson; her main-topsail was spread. She was between Herm and Jethou.

Gilliatt walked around the rock. He reached the base of the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur, at the foot of that sort of steep staircase from which, three months before, he had aided Ebenezer to descend.

He ascended it.

Most of the steps were already under water. Two or three only remained dry.

He climbed them.

These steps led to the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur. He reached the chair, looked at it a moment, placed his hand over his eyes, and passed it slowly from one eyebrow to another, a gesture

by which one seems to wipe out the past ; then he seated himself in the hollow of the rock, with the cliff behind him and the ocean under his feet.

The *Cashmere* was, at this moment, passing the large submerged tower, which was guarded by an officer and a cannon, which marks, in the channel, the half-way point between Herm and Saint-Pierre-Port.

Some rock-flowers were trembling in the crevices above Gilliatt's head. The water was blue as far as the eye could reach. The wind being from the east, there was little surf at Serk, the western side of which only can be seen from Guernsey. France, and the long yellow bands of the sands of Cateret, appeared like a mist in the distance. From time to time a white butterfly flew past. Butterflies like to hover over the sea.

There was very little breeze. The expanse of blue, below as well as above, was motionless. Not a ripple agitated these serpentine lines of blue, more or less deep, which, on the surface of the sea, indicate the hidden path of shoals.

There was such a light wind that the *Cashmere* had hoisted her studding-sails to catch the breeze. All her canvas was spread. But, the wind being contrary, the studding-sails only compelled her to keep the nearer to the Guernsey coast.

She had passed the beacon-light of Saint Sampson, and had reached the hill of the Castle of Valle. The moment drew near when she would double the point of Bû de la Rue.

Gilliatt watched her approach.

Both the air and the water seemed asleep. The tide was rising, not by waves, but by swelling. The level of the water rose without movement.

The smothered sound of the open sea resembled the breathing of an infant.

In the direction of the harbor of Saint Sampson could be heard hard blows, as of hammers. They were probably those of the carpenters who were arranging the tackle and the gear to remove the engine from the boat.

These sounds scarcely reached Gilliatt, on account of the mass of granite against which he was leaning his back.

The *Cashmere* approached with the slowness of a phantom.

Gilliatt watched it.

All at once a rippling sound and a sensation of cold caused him to look down.

The sea had reached his feet.

He lowered his eyes, then raised them again.

The *Cashmere* was quite near.

The cliff, in which the rain had hollowed out the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur, was so vertical, and the depth of water there so great, that, in

calm weather, ships could, without danger, sail within a few cables' lengths of the rocks.

The *Cashmere* was there. She rose up majestically, and seemed to emerge from the water.

She appeared like the enlargement of a shadow. The rigging stood out black against the sky, in the enormous swaying of the sea. The long sails which had veiled the sun for a moment, became almost rose-colored and assumed an indescribable transparency. The waves murmured indistinctly, but no other sound disturbed the majestic gliding of this outline. One could see the deck as though on board.

The *Cashmere* almost grazed the rock.

The helmsman was at the tiller, a cabin-boy was climbing the shrouds, several passengers were leaning over the edge, with their elbows on the bulwarks, and enjoying the beautiful scene; the captain was smoking. But Gilliatt saw nothing of this.

On the deck there was a little patch of sunlight. It was on this place he gazed. In this sunlight were Ebenezer and Déruchette. In this bright light he was seated near to her. They were sitting gracefully beside each other, —like two birds warming themselves in the noonday sun,—upon one of those benches covered by a little tarred awning, which well-equipped vessels provide for passengers, and

upon which, on English vessels, one reads, "For ladies only." Déruchette's head rested on Ebenezer's shoulder, Ebenezer's arm was clasped around Déruchette's waist; they were holding each other's hands, with fingers intertwined. The difference between these two angels was perceptible on these two exceedingly innocent faces. One was more maidenly; the other, more sidereal. Their chaste embrace was expressive. All hymeneal felicity was there, and also all purity. That seat was already an alcove and almost a nest. At the same time it was a halo—the sweet halo of love hovering over them in a cloud.

The silence was heavenly. Ebenezer had a thankful and thoughtful expression, Déruchette's lips were moving; and in that charming silence, as the wind was blowing toward the shore, in the fleeting moment when the sloop glided only a few fathoms from the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur, Gilliatt heard Déruchette's tender and delicate voice saying:

"Look! It seems as though there is a man upon the rock." The vessel then passed.

The *Cashmere* left the point of Bû de la Rue behind her and plunged into the deep sea-waves. In less than a quarter of an hour her masts and sails were only seen as a sort of white obelisk decreasing toward the horizon. The water now came up to Gilliatt's knees.

He watched the sloop sail away.

The breeze freshened on the open sea. He could see the *Cashmere* hoist her lower studding-sails and stay-sails in order to profit by this increase of wind.

The *Cashmere* was already beyond the waters of Guernsey. Gilliatt did not take his eyes from her.

The water now reached his waist.

The tide was rising. Time was passing.

The sea-gulls and cormorants flew restlessly around him. They seemed to be endeavoring to warn him. Perhaps, in these flocks of birds there was some sea-gull which had come from the Douvres and had recognized him.

An hour passed.

The wind on the open sea was not felt in the roads, but the *Cashmere* was rapidly sailing out of sight. The sloop seemed to be going at full speed. She was already nearly in front of the Casquets.

There was no spray around the rock Gild-Holm-'Ur; no wave dashed against the granite.

The water rose peacefully.

It had almost reached Gilliatt's shoulders.

Another hour passed.

The *Cashmere* was now beyond the waters of Aurigny. The Ortach rock concealed her for a moment. She entered the shadow of the rock and then emerged from it as from an

eclipse. The sloop was making rapid headway toward the north. She had gained the open sea. She was now only a point glittering in the sun.

The birds uttered little cries around Gilliatt.

Nothing but his head was now visible.

The sea rose with treacherous calmness.

Gilliatt remained motionless, watching the *Cashmere* vanish.

It was almost high-tide. Evening was approaching. Behind Gilliatt, in the roads, several fishing-boats were making for shore.

Gilliatt's eye remained fixed on the distant sloop. His steady gaze resembled nothing which can be seen upon earth. There was something inexpressible in this calm and tragic glance. His look contained all the resignation which an unrealized dream leaves behind it. This glance was the mournful acceptance of another fate. The flight of a star might be followed by such a look. From moment to moment celestial darkness deepened beneath that brow, under which his eyes remained fixed upon a point in space. During all this time, when the water was surrounding the rock of Gild-Holm-'Ur, the immense tranquillity of darkness rose in Gilliatt's deep eyes.

The *Cashmere* had become invisible, and was now but a speck in the mist. One could

not distinguish her without knowing where she was.

Little by little this speck, which was scarcely visible, became more indistinct.

Then it gradually diminished.

Then it vanished.

At the moment when the vessel faded on the horizon the head disappeared under the water.

Nothing was now left but the sea.

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Gerv. Bichard

Gilliatt used his knife, which he had been very careful to sharpen and to keep always in good condition, and he detached from the rocks a few limpets, somewhat like the clams found in the Mediterranean.—Toilers of the Sea, Vol. IV., 8.

BOOK ONE

THE ROCK

I.

A PLACE NOT EASY TO REACH AND DIFFICULT TO LEAVE

The boat seen from many points on the coast of Guernsey and at various times during the preceding evening was, as has been conjectured, the Dutch sloop. Gilliatt had chosen the channel along the coast among the rocks; it was a dangerous path, but also the most direct course. His only aim had been to take the shortest route. Shipwrecks wait for no one; the sea is exacting; the delay of an hour might be irreparable. He wished to arrive quickly, so that he might rescue the imperilled engine.

Gilliatt was especially desirous of attracting no attention on leaving Guernsey. He departed in the stealthy manner peculiar to a runaway. He seemed to be trying to hide himself. He avoided the eastern coast like one who found it inexpedient to pass within sight of Saint Sampson or Saint-Pierre-Port; he slipped—one might almost say, glided—silently past the inhabited stretch of coast.

Gilliatt was obliged to row through the breakers, but he managed the oars according to hydraulic principles, by taking the water quietly and dropping it slowly. In this manner he could row in the darkness as rapidly, and with as little noise, as possible. One might have thought that he was on his way to commit a crime.

The truth is, that, though throwing himself headlong into an undertaking seemingly impossible, and risking his life with nearly every chance against him, he feared competition.

As the day began to break, those unknown eyes, which perchance look through space, could have seen on one of the most solitary and dangerous places in the sea two objects, between which the interval was decreasing, because the one was approaching the other. The one, almost imperceptible amidst the great swells of the billows, was a sail-boat. In this sloop there was a man; it was the sloop bearing Gilliatt. The other, motionless, colossal, and black, presented a strange appearance above the waves. Two lofty pillars supported in the air above the water a sort of horizontal cross-beam, which resembled a bridge, between their summits. This cross-piece, so shapeless from a distance that it was impossible to imagine what it was, formed one body with two supports. It resembled a door-

way. Of what use was a doorway in this vast expanse, the sea? One would have thought it a Titanic dolmen planted there, in mid-ocean, by a gigantic freak and erected by hands which are accustomed to proportion their works to the great deep. This curious silhouette stood out against the clear background of the sky.

The morning light increased in the east; the whiteness of the horizon caused the sea to appear darker. Opposite, on the other side, the moon was setting.

These two pillars were the Douvres. The sort of mass encased between them, like an architrave between two jambs, was the Durande.

This rock holding thus its prey, and displaying it to view, was terrible to behold. Things sometimes present a dark and hostile front toward man. The attitude of these rocks was defiant. They seemed to be awaiting their opportunity.

Nothing could be more haughty and arrogant than this group; the vessel was conquered, the deep was triumphant. The two rocks, still wet with the storm of the previous night, seemed like two wrestlers sweating from the exertions of the fight. The wind had moderated; the sea now rippled peacefully. On the surface of the water could be seen breakers, from which feathers of foam fell gracefully.

From the open sea came a murmur like the humming of bees. All around was level, except the Douvres, which stood erect like two black pillars. Up to a certain height they were covered with seaweed. Their steep sides glittered in places like armor. They seemed prepared to recommence the fight. It was evident that they were embedded in submarine mountains. They impressed one with the sense of tragic omnipotence.

Ordinarily the sea conceals her blows. She prefers privacy. This unfathomable deep keeps her own secrets. It is very rare for these mysteries to give up their secrets. Certainly, catastrophe is monstrous, but to what extent is unknown. The sea is both open and secret; she evades and does not care to divulge her actions. She causes a shipwreck, and covers it over; her modesty consists in thus swallowing her misdeeds. The wave, like a hypocrite, slays, embezzles, ignores her crime, and smiles. She roars and then foams.

Here, however, was nothing of the kind. The Douvres looked triumphant as they raised the dead Durande above the waters. They looked like two giant arms emerging from the gulf, exhibiting to the storm the lifeless body of the ship. Somewhat like an assassin bragging of his deed.

The solemnity of the hour enhanced the

effect. The dawn of day possesses a mysterious grandeur composed of the borderland between dreaming and consciousness. At that transition period there is something mysterious yet left. The sort of immense capital H formed by the two Douvres, with the Durande for its cross-stroke, stood out against the horizon in the indescribable majesty of dawn.

Gilliatt wore his sea-clothes—woolen shirt and stockings, shoes studded with nails, knitted jacket, trousers of thick rough material, with pockets, and on his head one of those red woolen caps worn at that time by sailors, which, in the last century, were called *galériennes*.

He recognized the rocks and steered toward them.

The situation of the Durande was exactly contrary to that of a vessel sunk to the bottom; it was a vessel suspended in the air.

No problem of salvage could have been more peculiar.

It was broad daylight when Gilliatt arrived in the waters surrounding the rock.

There was, as we have just said, a quiet sea. The motion of the water was no more than that produced by its confinement among the rocks. Every channel, small or large, has this choppy sea and always white caps.

Gilliatt did not approach the Douvres without caution.

He cast the sounding-lead several times.

Gilliatt had to do a little unloading.

Accustomed to frequent absences, he always kept in the house things necessary for a journey. They consisted of a sack of biscuit, a bag of rye meal, a basket of dried, unsalted codfish and smoked beef, a large can of fresh water, a Norwegian chest, decorated with painted flowers, containing some thick woolen shirts, his short-coat, tarred leggings, and a sheepskin which he threw over his jacket at night. On leaving Bû de la Rue he had thrown all these things, with the addition of a loaf of fresh bread, hastily into the sloop. Anxious to be off, he had taken with him no other tools than his blacksmith's hammer, his axe and hatchet, a saw, and a knotted rope furnished with a grappling-iron. With a ladder of this description, and knowing how to use it, steep cliffs become accessible, and a good sailor can climb the roughest rocks in this way. In the island of Serk can be seen the extent to which the fishermen of Havre Gosselin use the knotted rope.

His nets and lines and all his fishing-tackle were in his boat. He had placed them there from force of habit, mechanically, for if he

carried out his undertaking he would be obliged to remain for some time in an archipelago of shoals, where fishing-tackle is useless.

At the moment Gilliatt came alongside of the rock the tide was falling—a favorable circumstance. The receding waves left uncovered at the base of the Little Douvres several flat or slightly inclined layers of rock which very much resembled consoles to support a floor. These table-rocks, some narrow, others wide, ranged at unequal intervals the whole length of the vertical monolith, and extended like a narrow cornice as far up as the Durande, which occupied the place between the two rocks. She was wedged there as in a vise. These platforms were convenient for landing and for making observations. The things which had been brought on the sloop, in case of necessity, could be temporarily unloaded there. But no time must be lost, for they remained above water only a few hours. When the tide rose they would be once more submerged under the breakers.

It was in front of these rocks, some of which were flat, others sloping, that Gilliatt pushed in his boat and lay-to.

A wet layer of slippery seaweed covered these rocks, which, in places, were rendered still more slippery by their sloping surfaces.

Gilliatt took off his shoes, jumped barefooted into the midst of the seaweed, and moored his boat to a point of rock.

Then he advanced as far as he could on the narrow cornice of granite, stood under the Durande, raised his eyes, and contemplated the wreck.

The Durande was caught, suspended, as it were, balanced between the two rocks, at about twenty feet above the water-line. It must have required a tremendously heavy sea to have driven her there.

To those familiar with the ocean there is nothing astonishing in these tremendous seas. To cite one instance only: On the 25th of January, 1840, in the Gulf of Stora, the end of a storm struck a brig with its expiring force and carried it in one sweep over the wrecked hull of the war-sloop *La Marne*, and fastened it, bowsprit first, between two cliffs.

Nevertheless, only half the Durande remained on the Douvres.

The vessel, snatched from the waves, had been in some way uprooted from the water by the hurricane. The whirlwind had twisted it, the whirling sea had held it back, and the vessel, thus grasped in opposite directions by the two hands of the tempest, had been broken like a lath. The stern, with the engine and the wheels lifted out of the breakers and driven

with all the fury of the cyclone into the defile of the Douvres, had entered up to her midship-beam, and there she had remained. The gust of wind had been well directed to drive that wedge between the two rocks; the hurricane had struck it as with the force of a club. The forepart had been carried away and rolled about by the storm and broken to pieces in the breakers.

The shattered hold had emptied the bodies of the drowned cattle into the sea.

A large section of the forward wall still clung to the rear part and hung from the riders of the left paddle-box by a few shattered braces, which could easily be broken by a blow from an axe.

Here and there, in the distant cavities of the rocks, could be seen beams, boards, ragged bits of sails, pieces of chains, and fragments of every description, resting quietly on the rocks.

Gilliatt gazed attentively at the Durande. The keel formed a ceiling above his head.

The horizon, where the boundless expanse of water scarcely moved, appeared calm. The sun was rising in all his splendor from that vast blue arch.

From time to time a drop of water dripped from the wreck into the sea.

II.

THE COMPLETION OF THE DISASTER.

The Douvres differed in shape as well as in height.

On the Little Douvre, which was curved and pointed, long veins of comparatively soft brick-colored rock could be seen branching out from base to summit, and dividing the inner part of the granite by its layers. At the place where these reddish bands projected were ledges favorable for climbing. One of these breaks, which was situated a little above the wreck, had been so much enlarged and worn away by the action of the waves that it had become a sort of niche in which a statue could have been placed. The granite of the Little Douvre was rounded on the surface and smooth like touch-stone, but this smoothness did not make it any the less hard. The Little Douvre terminated in a point like a horn. The Great Douvre was polished, unbroken, smooth, and perpendicular, and seemed as though cut according to a diagram. It was

composed of a single block, and had the appearance of ivory, only black. Not a hole, not a projection, could be seen. The rock was inhospitable; a convict could not have made use of it to aid him in his flight, nor could a bird have found a place to build her nest. At the summit there was, as on l'Homme rock, a level space, but this was inaccessible.

One might climb the Little Douvre, but could not remain there; one might remain on the Great Douvre, but could not climb there.

After his first glance Gilliatt returned to the sloop, unloaded it on the largest of the projections on a level with the water, made this compact mass into a package, which he tied in a tarpaulin fastened to a sling with a hoisting-ring through it, thrust this package into a corner of rock above the reach of the water; then, using both feet and hands, he climbed from projection to projection, clutching the Little Douvre, clinging to the smallest ledge, until he reached the Durande, wrecked in the air.

On reaching the level of the paddle-boxes he sprang upon the deck.

The interior of the wreck presented a sad aspect.

The Durande showed all the traces of a fearful struggle. It was the frightful ravages

of the storm. The action of the storm resembles the violence of a band of pirates. Nothing so closely resembles a criminal deed as a shipwreck. The cloud, the thunder, the rain, the winds, the waters, the rocks,—this is a terrible group of accomplices.

Standing on the abandoned deck, one could imagine that he heard the furious stamping of the spirits of the sea. The marks of rage appeared on every side. The strange contortions of certain portions of the ironwork indicated the great violence of the wind. Between-decks was like the cell of a maniac, in which everything has been broken.

No beast can compare with the sea for tearing its prey to pieces. The sea is full of claws. The wind bites, the billows devour, the wave is ravenous. It snatches and crushes at the same time. The ocean strikes with as much force as the claw of a lion.

The wreck of the Durande presented this peculiar feature, that it was destroyed in minute detail. It was a terrible kind of destruction; many things seemed to have been done purposely.

One is tempted to exclaim: What wickedness!

The ripping of the planking was done artistically. Ravages of this sort are peculiar to the cyclone. To chip and tear asunder is

the caprice of this great devastator. The cyclone has the same resources as the torturer: the disasters caused by it resemble executions. One might say that it is actuated by spite, that it exercises the refined cruelty of a savage. It dissects while it exterminates. It tortures the wreck, it avenges itself, it amuses itself, it descends to acts of pettiness.

Cyclones are rare in our climate, and all the more to be dreaded because they are unexpected. A rock in the path of a storm may cause it to revolve as on a pivot. It is probable that the Douvres rocks had been the pivot of the storm which had suddenly turned into a waterspout when striking this obstruction, which explains how the vessel had been thrown to such a height on these rocks.

When a cyclone blows, a vessel weighs no more in the wind than a stone in a sling.

The Durande had received a wound like that of a man who had been cut in two; she was an open trunk permitting the escape of a medley of rubbish resembling entrails. Cordage hung floating and trembling; chains rattled as they swung to and fro; the nerves and fibres of the vessel were bare and hanging. What was not broken was disjointed; fragments of the sheathing of the lining bristled with nails, resembling curry-combs; everything appeared to be ruined; a handspike

was now nothing but a bit of old iron; a plummet was but a lump of lead; a deadeye was but a piece of wood; a halliard was but an end of rope; a coil of rope was but a tangled skein; a bolt-rope was but a thread in the hem of a sail; everywhere the work of useless demolition had been accomplished; nothing remained which was not unhooked, unnailed, cracked, gnawed, warped, scuttled, annihilated; nothing in this hideous heap adhered; everything was torn, dislocated, ruptured, and permeated by an inexplicable, inconsistent liquid, which characterizes all confusions, from the confusion of men called battle to the confusion of the elements called chaos. Everything was going to ruin, everything was breaking away, and a stream of planks, paneling, scraps of old iron, cables, and beams had stopped at the edge of the great fracture of the hull, whence the least shock would precipitate it all into the sea.

What remained of this powerful hull, formerly so triumphant, including the whole of that stern suspended between the two Douvres, and probably on the point of falling, was cracked here and there, allowing the dark interior of the vessel to be seen through the holes.

The foam below spat on this miserable object.

III.

SOUND BUT NOT SAFE

Gilliatt did not expect to find only one-half of the boat. Nothing in the description, in other respects so precise, given by the captain of the *Shealtiel* had led him to anticipate the division of the boat in the centre. It was probably at the moment when this fracture took place, beneath the blinding density of the foam, when that "diabolical cracking" which was heard by the captain of the *Shealtiel* had taken place. This captain was doubtless at a distance when the last tremendous gust occurred, and what he had taken for a large sheet of water falling on the ship was a waterspout. Later, when he drew nearer to observe the wreck, he had been able to see only the after-part of the stranded vessel, the rest—that is to say, the large break which had separated the bow from the stern—being concealed from him by masses of rock.

With that exception, the captain of the

Shealtiel had given an exact report. The hull was lost, the engine remained intact.

Such chances are of as frequent occurrence in shipwrecks as in fires. The logic of disasters is beyond human understanding. The shattered masts had fallen, while the smoke-stack was not even bent; the great iron plate which sustained the engine had held it together and kept it in one piece. The plank sheathing of the paddle-boxes was slightly disjoined, like the slats of a window-blind; but through the openings could be seen the two wheels in good condition. Some of the floats were missing.

The great capstan of the stern had held firm as well as the engine. It retained its chain, and, thanks to its having been firmly set in a framework of beams, it might still be of use, provided, however, that the strain of the cable did not split the planking. The floor of the deck was bent and ready to give way at almost every point. This partition was shaky throughout.

On the other hand, the broken piece of the hull which was fastened between the Douvres held firm, as we have remarked, and seemed strong.

This preservation of the engine seemed somewhat sarcastic, adding irony to catastrophe. The sombre malice of the unknown

powers of evil sometimes breaks forth in this sort of bitter mockery. The engine was saved, but its preservation did not prevent it from being lost. The ocean kept it, in order to demolish it at leisure, like a cat playing with its prey.

It would hang there at the point of destruction, to be broken piece by piece. It would become a plaything for the savage amusement of the breakers. It would decrease day by day, and, as it were, melt away.

What could be done about it? That this vast block of mechanism and gear, at once massive and delicate, condemned to be motionless on account of its weight, abandoned in this solitude to destructive elements, exposed in the grasp of the rock to the force of the wind and the waves, could, under the frown of these implacable surroundings, escape slow destruction, seemed folly even to imagine.

The Durande was the prisoner of the Douvres.

How was she to be delivered?

How could she be extricated from her perilous position?

The escape of a man is difficult; but what a problem was this—the escape of an engine!

IV.

A PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF THE PLACE

Gilliatt was pressed on all sides by emergencies. The most urgent, however, was to find an immediate anchorage for the sloop; next, a shelter for himself.

The Durande, having settled down more on the larboard than on the starboard side, caused the right paddle-box to be higher than the one on the left.

Gilliatt climbed on the right paddle-box. From that position he could overlook the lower part of the breakers, and, although the small gallery of rocks ranged themselves in a line with the abrupt angles behind the Douvres, making several turns, Gilliatt was able to study the geometrical plan of the rock.

This survey was his preliminary step. The Douvres, as we have already described them, were like two high gable-ends marking the narrow entrance to a row of small granite cliffs with perpendicular faces.

These curious passages, which seem as

though they were hewn out with a hatchet, are not rare in primitive submarine formations.

This tortuous defile was never bare, even at low tide. A very boisterous current always traversed it from end to end. The abruptness of its turnings was favorable or unfavorable according to the nature of the prevailing wind; sometimes it broke the swell and caused it to fall; at other times it lashed it into fury. This latter effect was the more frequent; opposition angers the sea and pushes it on to excesses; foam is the continuation of the wave.

Wind, in a storm confined between these two rocks, undergoes the same compression and acquires the same wild force. It is the tempest fretting under its confinement. The immense blast still remains great and fierce. It is ponderous and stinging. It pierces at the same time that it crushes. Imagine the tempest contracted into a draught through a crevice.

The two chains of rock separated by this sort of passage of the sea descended lower than the Douvres by steps gradually decreasing in height, and buried themselves together in the sea at a short distance. There was another narrow channel, not so high as the Douvres passage, but even narrower, which formed the eastern entrance to the defile. It was clear that the double prolongation of the

two ridges of rock continued under the water as far as l'Homme rock, which was placed as a square citadel at the other end of this group.

Moreover, at low tide, and this was the time when Gilliatt made his observations, these two ridges of shoals showed their crests, some dry and all of them visible, arranged in an uninterrupted file.

L'Homme bordered and buttressed on the east the entire mass of rock which was supported on the west by the Douvres.

The whole rock, from a bird's-eye view, presented a serpentine chaplet of breakers, with the Douvres at one end and l'Homme at the other.

The Douvres rock, taken as a whole, was nothing else than the protruding of two gigantic shafts of granite rising vertically and almost touching each other like crests of ridges lying beneath the ocean. These immense ridges are also found elsewhere than in the deep. The wind and the sea had cut this rock like the teeth of a saw. Only the top of the ridge was visible; this constituted the group of rocks. What an enormous portion must have been concealed by the waves! The passage into which the storm had flung the Durande was the space between these two colossal shafts.

This passage, zigzag as the lightning, was about the same width through its entire

length. The ocean had so fashioned it. Sometimes these strange regularities are produced by endless confusion. A kind of geometry emerging from the wave. From one end of the defile to the other the two parallel walls of granite stood face to face for a distance which was almost exactly measured by the midship-beam of the Durande. The widening of the Little Douvre, bent and curved between the two Douvres, furnished a place for the paddle-boxes. In any other position the paddle-boxes would have been crushed.

The double interior façade of the rock was hideous. When, in exploring the desert of waters called the ocean, one comes across what is foreign to the sea, everything becomes surprising and shapeless. What Gilliatt could perceive of the defile from the height of the wreck was appalling. In the rocky gorges of the ocean there is a permanent expression of shipwreck. The defile of the Douvres had its own, a frightful one. The oxides of the rock showed here and there on the cliffs in red spots like clotted blood. It somewhat resembled the bloody oozing from the cellar of a slaughter-house. This rock seemed like a charnel-house. The coarse marine stone, variously colored in some places by the decomposition of the

metallic amalgams mingled with the rock, in others by mold, exhibited in places fearful purples, suspicious looking greens, vermilion splashes, awakening ideas of murder and extermination. One would have imagined that he was looking at the unwiped wall of a room in which a murder had been committed. Or one would have imagined that men had been crushed and had left their traces there. The summit of the peak gave one the impression of untold agony. In several places this carnage seemed to be still trickling, the wall was wet, and it seemed impossible to touch it with one's finger without drawing it back stained with blood. A rust of murder covered everything. At the foot of the double parallel escarpment, scattered on the surface of the water or beneath the waves, or on dry land in the parts which had been washed away, monstrous rounded boulders, some scarlet, others black or violet, resembled viscera; one could readily imagine them to be fresh lungs or putrid livers. It seemed as though the bowels of giants had been emptied there. Long red threads, which might have been taken for oozings from a funeral bier, streaked the granite from top to bottom.

These aspects are common in the caverns of the sea.

V.

A WORD ON THE SECRET CO-OPERATION OF THE ELEMENTS

For those who, by the chances of travel, may be condemned to the temporary habitation of a rock in the ocean, the form of the rock is not a matter of indifference. There is the pyramidal rock, a single peak rising out of the water; the circular rock, somewhat resembling a ring of huge stones; and also the corridor rock. The corridor rock is the most alarming. It is not only on account of the tossing of the waves between its inner walls and the tumult of the imprisoned waters, but also because of the obscure meteorological characteristics which appear to be revealed by the parallelism of two rocks in the open sea. These two straight walls of rock form a veritable voltaic battery.

A corridor rock faces the east. This is important to know, because it produces a great effect on the action of the air and the sea. The corridor rock acts upon the waves and the wind mechanically in consequence

of its shape; galvanically, by the different magnetic actions rendered possible by its vertical walls and its masses in juxtaposition, but counteracted by each other.

A rock of this description attracts to itself all the furious forces scattered in the hurricane, and exercises a singular power of concentrating the tempest.

Hence, in the vicinity of these rocks, the storms are much more violent.

It must be borne in mind that the wind is composite. The wind is believed to be a simple force, but that is by no means true. This force is not only chemical, but also magnetic. There is something inexplicable about it. The wind is electric as well as aërial. Certain winds coincide with the aurora borealis. The wind from the Aguilles bank rolls waves a hundred feet high, to the astonishment of Dumont d'Urville. "*La Corvette*" (the sloop of war), said he, "*ne savait à qui entendre*" (did not know what to do first). During the gales of the southern seas the ocean is bloated by unhealthy tumors, and the sea becomes so horrible that the savages flee in order to avoid seeing it. The gales of the northern seas are different; they are mixed with splinters of ice; and these northern gales, which cannot be breathed, blow the sledges of the Esqui-

maux back on the snow. Other winds burn. For instance, the simoon of Africa is the same wind called the typhoon in China and the samiel in India. Simoon, typhoon, and samiel sound like the names of demons. They split the tops of mountains; a storm vitrified the volcano of Tolucca. The hot wind, the whirlwind of inky hue overshadowing the flame-colored clouds, gave rise to this saying in the Vedas: "Here is the black god, who has come to steal the red cows." In all these facts we can trace the presence of the mysterious workings of electricity.

The wind is full of this mystery. The sea also: it, too, is composite in its nature; under its billows of water, which are visible, are its billows of strength, which are invisible. It is composed of everything. Of all the elements, the ocean is the most indivisible and the most profound.

Try to imagine this chaos, so enormous that it contains everything. It is the universal receptacle, the reservoir for germs of life, the crucible for transformations. It amasses, then disperses; it accumulates, then scatters; it devours, then creates. It receives all the washings of the land, and treasures them. It is solid in the iceberg, liquid in the wave, fluid in effluvia. Viewed as matter, it is dense; viewed as a force, it is abstract. It equalizes and unites

phenomena. It is simplified by the infinitude of its combinations. It becomes transparent by the mingling and moving of its properties. Soluble diversity is absorbed in its unity. Its elements are so numerous that it becomes an identity. One of its drops contains every one of its ingredients. It attains its equilibrium through many storms. Plato saw the motion of the spheres. A strange fact, though not the less real, is, that in the colossal terrestrial journey around the sun the ocean, with its ebb and flow, is the pendulum of the globe.

In one phenomenon of the sea all phenomena are presented. The sea is sucked up by the whirlwind as by a siphon; a storm is like the shaft of a pump; thunder proceeds from the water as well as from the air; on shipboard dull shocks are felt, and then an odor of sulphur escapes from the chain-lockers. The ocean boils. "The devil has put the sea into his cauldron," said Ruyter. During certain tempests which characterize the changes of the season and the return of the creative forces to their equilibrium, ships which are beaten by the foam seem to give out a light, and sparks of phosphorus run along the rigging, sometimes so close to the sailors at their work that they stretch forth their hands and try to catch these birds of fire in their flight. After the earthquake in

Lisbon a blast as from a furnace drove a wave sixty feet high over the city. The oscillation of the ocean is closely connected with the convulsions of the earth. These immeasurable forces make it possible for any kind of deluge to take place. Toward the close of 1864, a hundred leagues from the coast of Malabar, one of the Maldive islands sank into the sea. It sank to the bottom like a vessel. The fishermen who set out from it in the morning found no trace of it on their return at nightfall; they were scarcely able to distinguish their villages under the sea, and on this occasion it was the boats which were present at the wreck of the houses.

In Europe, where nature seems to restrain itself out of respect for civilization, such events are so rare as to be considered almost impossible. Jersey and Guernsey, however, were once a part of Gaul; and just before these lines were written an equinoctial gale on the frontier between England and Scotland had demolished the cliff bordering on the Frith of Forth.

Nowhere do these terrific forces appear more formidably conjoined than in the wonderful northern fjord called Lyse-Fjord. The Lyse-Fjord is the most to be dreaded of all the rocky fjords of the ocean. That is completely demonstrated. It is in Norwegian waters, in

the vicinity of the rough Stavanger Gulf, at the fifty-ninth parallel of latitude. The water is heavy and black, agitated by intermittent storms. In this water, in the midst of this solitude, there is a long, gloomy passage which no one enters. No one passes through it; no vessel trusts itself there. A passage ten leagues long between two walls three thousand feet high; such is the passage which presents an entrance to the sea. This defile has curves and angles like all fjords of the sea, which are never straight, being formed by the windings of the water. In the Lyse-Fjord the waves are mostly quiet; the sky is clear; it is a terrible place. Where is the wind? Not on high. Where is the thunder? Not in the sky. The wind is beneath the sea, the thunder is in the rock. From time to time the water trembles. At certain moments, nearly half-way up the vertical cliff, a thousand or fifteen hundred feet above the waves, on the south side rather than on the north, the rock suddenly thunders, although there is not a cloud in the air; a flash of lightning darts forth from it, then withdraws, like those toys which fly forth and then contract in the hands of children; it contracts and expands, darts to the opposite cliff, re-enters the rock, then, springing back, begins anew; multiplies its heads and tongues, bristles with points,

strikes wherever it can; now begins again, then is totally extinguished. Flocks of birds take to flight. Nothing is so mysterious as this artillery proceeding from the invisible. One cliff attacks the other. The cliffs thunder at each other. This war does not concern mankind. The hatred of two walls in the abyss.

In the Lyse-Fjord the wind becomes a noxious exhalation; the rock performs the function of a cloud, and the thunder breaks forth like a volcano. This strange defile is of volcanic origin, the proof of which lies in the two cliffs.

VI.

A STABLE FOR THE HORSE

Gilliatt was sufficiently familiar with rocks to recognize the dangers of the Douvres. Before all, as we have said, it was necessary to place the sloop in safety.

The double ridge of reefs which stretched in a sinuous lane behind the Douvres was grouped here and there with other rocks, and suggested coves and caverns opening into the straggling way and attaching themselves to the principal defile like branches to the trunk of a tree.

The lower part of the reef was carpeted with seaweed and the upper part with lichens. The uniform level of the seaweed on all the rocks marked the line of high tide and also the level of the sea when calm. The places not reached by the water presented those silvery and golden hues imparted to marine granite by the streaks of white and yellow lichens.

An excrescence of conical shells covered

the rock in certain places — the dry-rot of granite. At other points, in the inner corners, where fine sand had accumulated, which had been brought to the surface rather by the wind than by the sea, there grew tufts of blue thistles.

In the redans sheltered from the sea could be traced little holes bored by the sea-urchins. This prickly shell-fish, which moves, a living ball, by rolling on its spines, and whose armor is composed of more than ten thousand pieces artistically adjusted and fastened together— this sea-urchin, the mouth of which is called, for some unknown reason, "Aristotle's Lantern," wears away the granite with its five teeth, which gnaw the stone, after which it lodges itself in the hole. In these cells it is found by the seekers of the products of the sea. They cut it into four parts and eat it raw, like an oyster. Some people dip bread in its soft flesh. Hence it is also called *œuf de mer* (sea egg).

The distant summits of the reefs which were left above water by the receding tide terminated, directly below l'Homme cliff, in a sort of creek walled on nearly every side by the rock.

Evidently, here was a possible anchorage. Gilliatt observed this creek.

It had the form of a horseshoe, and opened

on one side to the east wind, which is the least violent of all the winds which blow in this place. The water there was hemmed in and almost motionless.

This bay was comparatively safe. Gilliatt, moreover, had not much of a choice.

If he wished to profit by the low tide he must make haste.

The weather, moreover, continued fine and mild. The insolent sea was now in a good humor.

Gilliatt descended, put on his shoes, unfastened the moorings, re-embarked, and pushed out to sea.

He rowed near the coast, skirting the rock.

Having reached l'Homme, he examined the entrance to the creek.

A steady rippling of the waves, a movement invisible except to a sailor, marked the channel.

For a moment Gilliatt contemplated this effect, which could scarcely be distinguished in the waves, then he put out a little to sea to enable him to tack easily, steered well into the channel, and suddenly, with a single stroke of the oar, he entered the little creek.

He sounded.

The anchorage was good.

The sloop would be protected in this place from almost every contingency of the season.

In the most dreaded reefs these peaceful nooks can be found. The harbors which are found among the rocks resemble the hospitality of the Bedouin; they are friendly and reliable.

Gilliatt brought the sloop as near as he could to l'Homme, but still far enough off to escape grounding, and then cast his two anchors.

That done, he folded his arms and took counsel with himself.

The sloop was in a sheltered place; that was one problem solved; now the second presented itself.

Where, then, should he find shelter for himself?

Two places presented themselves; the sloop itself, with its corner of a cabin, scarcely inhabitable, and the summit of l'Homme, which was easy to scale.

From either of these sheltered places it was possible, by jumping from rock to rock, at low tide, to gain, almost dry-shod, the passage of the Douvres where the Durande was.

But the low tide lasts only a very short while, and all the rest of the time he would be cut off, either from the place in which he took refuge or from the wreck, by more than twelve hundred feet.

It is a difficult thing to swim in water

surrounding rocks, and when the sea is rough it is impossible.

He must give up all idea of taking refuge in the sloop or on l'Homme.

There was no possible resting-place in the neighboring rocks.

The summits of the lower rocks were submerged twice a day by the high tide. The summits of the taller rocks were constantly swept by the spray. An inhospitable drenching.

No choice remained but the wreck itself.

Could anyone lodge there?

Gilliatt hoped so.

VII.

A CHAMBER FOR THE TRAVELER

Half an hour later Gilliatt returned to the wreck, climbed up to the deck and went below as far as between-decks, and thence to the hold, making a more thorough examination than on the occasion of his first visit.

By the help of the capstan he hoisted upon the deck of the Durande the bundle which he had brought with him in the sloop. The capstan had worked well. Bars for turning it were not wanting. Gilliatt had but to make his choice amid this heap of rubbish. Among the ruins he found a chisel; it had doubtless fallen from the carpenter's chest; he placed it in his little box of tools.

Besides this, for in destitution everything counts, he had his knife in his pocket.

Gilliatt worked all day on the wreck, clearing away, consolidating, arranging.

At nightfall he recognized the following facts:

The whole wreck was trembling in the wind.

The framework shook at every step which Gilliatt took. Nothing was solid and firm except the part of the hull, embedded between the rocks, which contained the engine. There the beams rested firmly on the granite.

It would be imprudent for him to locate himself in the Durande. This might overload it; and instead of adding to the weight of the vessel, it was important to lighten it.

To add weight to the wreck was just the opposite of what ought to be done.

This wreck required the most careful treatment. It was like a sick man about to die. There could readily be wind strong enough to destroy it.

It was now scarcely safe to work at it. The shock from the amount of work which the wreck would necessarily have to withstand would, perhaps, try it beyond its strength.

Besides, if any accident should happen during the night while Gilliatt was asleep, to be in the wreck would be to perish with it. No assistance was possible; all would be lost. In order to rescue the wreck he must remain outside of it.

How to be outside and yet near it, that was the problem.

This difficulty was becoming complicated.

Where, under such conditions, could he find a shelter?

Gilliatt reflected.

Only the two Douvres remained. They seemed scarcely inhabitable.

A sort of excrescence could be distinguished on the upper plateau of the Great Douvre.

High rocks with flattened summits, like the Great Douvre and l'Homme, are decapitated peaks. They abound among the mountains and in the ocean. Certain rocks, especially among those found in the open sea, have notches, like trees which have been hacked. They look as though they had received a blow from a hatchet. In fact, they are subjected to great swaying movements of the hurricane, that woodcutter of the sea.

Other causes for deluge exist, still more profound. Hence there are so many scars on all these old granite formations. Some of these granite rocks have had their heads cut off. Occasionally, for some unknown cause, this head does not fall, but remains, mutilated, on the summit of the trunk. This peculiarity is not uncommon. The Roque-au-Diable (Devil's Rock) at Guernsey and the Table in the valley of Anweiler illustrate some of the most surprising features of this singular geological enigma.

Something similar had probably happened to the Great Douvre.

If the protuberance noticed on the plateau

was not a natural rounding out of the stone, it must necessarily be some remaining fragment of the ruined pinnacle.

Perhaps there was a hollow in this rock.

A hole in which a man might take refuge. Gilliatt asked for nothing better.

But how could he reach this plateau? how climb this vertical wall, hard and polished as a pebble, half covered by a carpet of conferva, and presenting the slippery appearance of a soaped surface?

From the deck of the Durande to the ridge of the plateau was a distance of at least thirty feet.

Out of the box of tools Gilliatt took the knotted rope, hooked it to his belt with the grappling-iron, and began to climb the Little Douvre. The higher he mounted the rougher became the ascent. He had neglected to take off his shoes, which increased the difficulty. After great exertion he reached the top. Then he stood erect. There was scarcely place for his two feet. It would therefore be difficult to make this his lodging-place. A stylite would have been contented with it. Gilliatt, who was ambitious, wished for something better.

The Little Douvre, which was bent toward the great one, looked from the distance as though saluting it, for the two Douvres, which

were twenty feet apart at the bottom, were not separated by more than eight or ten feet at their summits.

From the point to which he had climbed Gilliatt had a more distinct view of the rocky protuberance which partly covered the plateau of the Great Douvre.

This plateau rose at least eighteen feet above his head.

He was separated from it by a precipice.

The overhanging escarpment of the Little Douvre sloped away beneath him.

Gilliatt detached the knotted rope from his belt, glanced rapidly at the distance, and hurled the grappling-iron on the plateau.

The grappling-iron grazed the rock, then slipped. The knotted rope, with the grappling-iron fastened to its end, fell down beneath Gilliatt's feet the length of the Little Douvre.

Gilliatt tried again. This time he threw the rope further forward, fixing his eyes on the granite protuberance, where he perceived crevices and grooves.

His aim was so skilful and so true that the hook caught.

Gilliatt pulled on the rope.

The rock gave way, and the knotted rope fell, beating the steep wall of the cliff beneath Gilliatt.

Gilliatt threw the grappling-iron a third time.

This time it did not fall back.

Gilliatt pulled on the rope. It resisted. The grappling-iron was anchored.

It had been caught in some crevice of the plateau which was invisible to Gilliatt. The question was whether he should trust his life to this unknown support.

Gilliatt did not hesitate.

The greatest haste was necessary. He must go by the shortest route.

Moreover, it would be almost impossible to return to the deck of the Durande for the purpose of devising some other way.

He would probably have slipped and would have been almost sure to fall. It is easier to climb than to descend.

Gilliatt moved with precision, as do all good sailors. He never wasted any strength. He only exerted himself as much as was necessary to accomplish his undertakings. This was the reason why he could execute prodigies of valor with only ordinary muscles. His biceps were no stronger than those of ordinary men, but his heart was different. To strength, which is physical, he added energy, which is moral.

The feat to be accomplished was formidable.

How was he to pass over the distance

between the two Douvres, suspended as he was by only this rope?

In acts of devotion or of piety one often meets with these dilemmas, which seem to have been placed in our way by death.

"Wilt thou do that?" asks the shadow.

Gilliatt tested the cord again; the grappling-iron held good.

Wrapping his handkerchief around his left hand, he clasped the knotted rope with his right, which he covered with his left; then stretching one foot, and striking out vigorously with the other, in order that the impetus might prevent the rope from twisting, he threw himself from the summit of the Little Douvre upon the escarpment of the Great Douvre.

It was a great shock.

Notwithstanding the precautions taken by Gilliatt, the rope did twist, and his shoulders struck the rock.

He rebounded.

His fists, in their turn, dashed against the rock. The handkerchief became loosened. They were scratched; indeed, they narrowly escaped being crushed.

Gilliatt remained suspended there a moment, feeling very dizzy.

However, he was sufficiently master of himself to hold on to the rope.

A few moments passed in jerks and oscillations before he was able to seize the rope with his feet; but he finally succeeded.

On recovering himself, he looked down, clinging to the rope with his hands as well as his feet.

He was not disturbed about the length of his rope, which had more than once served him for greater heights. In fact, the rope trailed on the deck of the Durande.

As Gilliatt felt sure that he would be able to descend again, he now began to climb.

In a few moments he had gained the plateau.

Never before had any creature without wings set foot there. This plateau was covered with guano. It was an irregular trapezium fractured from the colossal granite prism called the Great Douvre. This trapezium was hollowed out in the centre like a basin. The work of the rains.

Gilliatt's conjecture had, moreover, been correct. At the southern angle of the trapezium a mass of superimposed rocks was visible, probably the fragments of the crumbling summit. These rocks, a sort of pile of gigantic paving-stones, were far enough apart to allow a wild beast straying on the peak to slip between them. They leaned against each other in great confusion, leaving interstices filled with rubbish. They formed neither grottoes nor caverns, but the pile was full of holes, like

those of a sponge. One of these holes was large enough for Gilliatt to enter.

The bottom of this den was covered with grass and moss. Gilliatt would fit in it as in a case.

The recess at the entrance was two feet high. It contracted toward the other extremity. Some stone coffins are so shaped. As the pile of rocks were heaped up to the southwest, the den was protected from the waves, but open to the north wind.

Gilliatt was pleased with it.

The two problems were solved; the sloop had found a harbor and he had found a place of shelter.

The advantage of this place was, that it was within reach of the wreck.

The grappling-iron fastened to the knotted rope was firmly fixed where it had fallen, between two masses of rock. Gilliatt rendered it immovable by placing a large stone upon it.

Now he began to have easy access to the Durande.

Henceforth he felt at home.

The Great Douvre was his house; the Durande his workshop.

Nothing could be easier than to go and come, to ascend and descend.

He slid rapidly down the knotted rope to the deck.

The day was favorable; he had made a good beginning; he felt satisfied with his efforts, and now found that he was hungry.

He untied his basket of provisions, opened his knife, cut a slice of smoked beef, took a bite of brown bread, a drink from his can of fresh water, and in fact supped admirably.

To work well and to have a good meal are two great pleasures. A full stomach is like a satisfied conscience. His supper was eaten, and a little daylight yet remained. He took advantage of it by beginning to unload the wreck, which was exceedingly necessary.

He had passed part of the day in sorting the rubbish. On one side of the solid compartment which contained the engine he placed everything that could be of use, such as iron, ropes, and sailcloth. What was useless he threw into the sea.

The cargo of the sloop, hoisted upon the deck by the capstan, was an encumbrance, small as it was. Gilliatt perceived a sort of niche, hollowed out at a height within his reach, in the side of the Little Douvre. These natural pockets, not shut in, it is true, are often found in rocks. He thought that it would be possible to store things in this niche. In the back part he placed his two cases,—the one containing his tools, the other his clothing, his two sacks of rye, and the biscuits,—and in

front, a little too near the edge, perhaps,—for lack of room,—his basket of provisions.

He had carefully removed from the box containing his clothing, his sheepskin, his hooded coat, and his tarred leggings.

In order to prevent the action of the wind on the knotted rope, he fastened the lower end to a rider on the Durande.

The Durande having been driven against it with great force, this rider was very much bent, and held the end of the rope as well as though it had been a closed hand.

The top of the rope remained. To fasten the base was well enough, but at the summit of the cliff, at the place where the knotted rope touched the edge of the plateau, there was danger of its being somewhat worn away by the sharp edge of the rock.

Gilliatt searched in the heap of rubbish in reserve, and took from it some bits of sail-cloth, and from a bunch of old ropes he pulled some strands of rope-yarn, with which he filled his pockets.

A sailor would have guessed that he intended padding the portion of the knotted rope which rubbed on the sharp edge of the rock with these bits of rags and ends of threads to preserve it from all injury—an operation which is called "service."

Having supplied himself with these scraps,

he put on his leggings, drew on his great-coat over his jacket, pulled the hood over his red cap, tied the sheepskin around his neck by two of its legs, and clothed thus in this complete panoply, he grasped the rope, henceforth firmly fixed in the side of the Great Douvre, and mounted to the assault of that sombre citadel, the sea.

Notwithstanding his scratched hands, Gilliatt quickly reached the plateau.

The last glow of the setting sun was dying. It was night upon the sea.

A little light still shone on the top of the Douvre.

Gilliatt took advantage of this remnant of daylight to bind the knotted rope. At the point which passed over the edge of the rock he wound a bandage of several thicknesses of sailcloth, which he strongly fastened at every turn. It somewhat resembled the padding which actresses wear upon their knees during the agonies and supplications of the fifth act.

The binding completed, Gilliatt arose from his stooping position.

For some moments, while he was adjusting the strips upon the knotted rope, he had a confused idea that he saw something fluttering in an extraordinary manner in the air.

The sound which it made in the silence of

the evening resembled the noise of the beating of the wings of an immense bat.

Gilliatt raised his eyes.

A large black circle was revolving above his head in the pale twilight of the boundless sky.

Such rings are seen, in old pictures, encircling the heads of saints. Those, however, are of gold on a dark background, while this was dark on a light background. No effect could have been more strange. It might have been called the aureola of night, over the Great Douvre.

This circle approached Gilliatt, then receded; sometimes becoming smaller, and then widening again.

It consisted of sea-gulls, large gulls, frigate-birds, cormorants, and sea-mews—a cloud of astonished sea-birds.

It is probable that the Great Douvre was their home, and that they were going to roost. Gilliatt had taken a chamber in their home. This unexpected lodger disturbed them. A man there was an object they had never seen.

They flew about in a frightened way for some time.

They seemed to be waiting for Gilliatt to go.

Gilliatt dreamily followed them with his eyes.

This flying whirlwind ended by the birds

giving up their design; the circle suddenly changed into a spiral, and the cloud of cormorants settled down upon l'Homme, at the other end of the rock.

There they seemed to be consulting and deliberating. When Gilliatt lay down in his granite cell, and put a stone under his head for a pillow, he heard, for a long time, the birds chattering, one after the other, or croaking, as if by turns.

Then they were silent, and all went to sleep; the birds upon their rock and Gilliatt upon his.

VIII.

IMPORTUNÆQUE VOLUCRES

(Importunate Birds.)

Gilliatt slept well, notwithstanding he was awakened from time to time by the cold. He had naturally placed his feet at the end and his head at the entrance of his den. He had not taken the precaution of removing from his bed a number of sharp stones, which did not add to the comfort of his sleep.

He opened his eyes occasionally.

At intervals he heard loud intonations. It was the rising tide entering the caverns of the rock making a sound like the report of a cannon.

All the surroundings in which he was placed presented the extraordinary aspect of a vision; Gilliatt was surrounded by hallucinations. The vagueness of night increasing this effect, he beheld himself plunged in an unreal world. He said to himself, "I am dreaming."

Then he went to sleep again, and this time he dreamed that he was once more at Bû de la Rue, at the Bravées, at Saint Sampson. He heard Déruchette singing; he was among realities. As long as he slept he thought himself awake and active; when he awakened he

thought that he was asleep. In fact, from this time forward he lived in a dream.

Toward the middle of the night a great noise was heard in the heavens. Gilliatt had a vague consciousness of it in his sleep. It is probable that the breeze was rising.

Once, when awakened by a cold shiver, he opened his eyelids a little wider than hitherto. Large clouds were overhead; the moon was flying through the heavens, and a large star was pursuing her.

Gilliatt's mind was filled with the vagueness of his dreams, and the exaggeration which occurs in dreams mingled with the wild scenes of the night.

At daybreak he was chilled, and slept soundly. The sudden appearance of dawn aroused him from his sleep, which, perhaps, might have been dangerous. His retreat faced the rising sun.

Gilliatt yawned, stretched, and sprang out of the hole. He had slept so soundly that at first he could not tell where he was.

Little by little the feeling of reality returned to him, and to such a degree that he exclaimed, "Let us breakfast!"

The weather was calm, the sky cold and clear, the clouds had vanished, the winds had swept them from the horizon during the night, and now the sun rose brightly. It was the

beginning of a second fine day. Gilliatt felt joyful.

He took off his coat and his leggings and rolled them in the sheepskin, with the wool inside, fastened the roll with an end of rope, and pushed it in the back part of the den, where it would be sheltered in case of rain.

Then he made his bed; in other words, picked out the stones.

This done, he let himself slide the length of the rope, which brought him to the deck of the Durande, and then he ran to the niche where he had placed the basket of provisions.

The basket was no longer there. As it had been placed very near the edge, the gale during the night had blown it off and cast it into the sea. The wind thus announced its hostile intentions.

A certain determined malice must have taken possession of the wind when it penetrated into that place for the basket.

It was the beginning of hostilities.

Gilliatt understood it.

It is very difficult for those who have lived in rude familiarity with the sea to think of the sea and the rocks otherwise than as individuals.

The only resource remaining to Gilliatt, except his biscuit and rye meal, was the shellfish which had sustained the man who had died of hunger on l'Homme rock.

As for fishing, it could not be thought of. Fish dislike shocks, and therefore avoid breakers. Bow-net and drag-net fishermen would waste their time fishing among these reefs, the points of which tear the nets.

Gilliatt breakfasted on some limpets which he detached from the rock after much difficulty. He nearly broke his knife trying to get them.

While he was partaking of this meagre luncheon he heard a strange tumult on the sea. He looked about him.

It was the flock of sea-gulls and sea-mews which had just swooped down on one of the low rocks, flapping their wings, tumbling over each other, screaming and shrieking. They were flying noisily to the same point. This horde was pillaging something with beak and talons.

That something was Gilliatt's basket. The basket had been thrown by the wind on a sharp rock, which had broken it open. The birds had at once gathered around it. They were carrying off in their beaks all kinds of scraps. Gilliatt recognized, from a distance, his smoked beef and his dried fish.

The birds in their turn were retaliating. Even they had taken their revenge. Gilliatt had deprived them of their dwelling; so they now deprived him of his supper.

IX.

THE ROCK AND THE MANNER OF USING IT

A week passed.

Although it was the rainy season, it did not rain, which pleased Gilliatt very much.

However, what he had undertaken seemed, at least in appearance, to exceed human strength. Success was so improbable that the attempt seemed like madness.

Undertakings, when viewed closely, manifest their difficulties and dangers. There is nothing like commencing a thing to see how difficult it will be to finish it. Everything offers resistance in the beginning. The first step which one takes is a discouraging revelation. The difficulty one encounters pricks like a thorn.

Gilliatt found himself immediately surrounded by obstacles.

In order to remove the engine of the Durande from the wreck in which it was three-quarters buried, to attempt such a salvage in such a place and in such a season, with

any chance of success, it seemed as though troops of men would be required, and Gilliatt was alone. He needed a whole outfit of carpenter's tools and machinery; Gilliatt had a saw, a hatchet, a chisel, and a hammer. A good workshop and a good shed were necessary; Gilliatt had not a roof over him. Food would be needed; Gilliatt had not even bread.

Anyone who could have seen Gilliatt at work during this first week would not have understood what he was trying to accomplish. He seemed no longer to occupy himself with the Durande or the two Douvres. He was only working among the breakers; he seemed absorbed in saving small portions of the wreck. He took advantage of the low tides to strip the reefs of all that the wreck had distributed among them. He went from rock to rock, picking up whatever the sea had thrown there—bits of sailcloth, ends of rope, pieces of iron, splinters from panels, shattered planks, broken yards, here a beam, there a chain, further on a pulley.

At the same time he familiarized himself with all the irregularities of the rocks. Not one of them was habitable, which was a great disappointment to Gilliatt, who had suffered from cold during the night in the crevice between the stone slabs, on the summit of the

Great Douvre, where he lodged, and he hoped to find a better shelter.

Two of these recesses were somewhat spacious. Although the flagging of natural rock was almost always oblique and uneven, one could stand and even walk on it. The rain and the wind had full sweep, but the high tide did not reach these recesses. They were close to the Little Douvre, and accessible at all times. Gilliatt decided that one should serve as a storehouse and the other as a forge.

With all the gaskets belonging to the sail-yards and all the knittles of the earings which he could gather together, he made packages of the fragments of the wreckage, tying the odds and ends in bundles and the canvas in packages. He fastened them all carefully. As the rising tide was about to float these bales, he dragged them across the reefs to his storehouse. In the hollow of the rock he found a top-rope by means of which he could haul even large pieces of timber. In the same manner he drew out of the water numerous fragments of chains which were scattered among the breakers.

Gilliatt was wonderfully persevering in this work. He accomplished everything he wished. Nothing resists the perseverance of the ant.

At the end of the week Gilliatt had care-

fully arranged in the granite shed all these shapeless odds and ends left by the storm. There was a corner for tacks and a corner for sheets; the tow-lines were not mixed with the halliards; the ribs were arranged according to the number of their holes; the puddenings, carefully detached from the rings of the broken anchors, were wound in skeins; the dead-eyes, with their sheaves missing, were put in a separate place from the tackle-blocks; the toggle, bull's-eyes, swifters, clamps, snatch-blocks, down-haul tackle, hollow cleats, pendants, flukes, parrels, stoppers, and booms occupied separate compartments, provided they had not been destroyed by the storm; all the woodwork, cross-beams, posts, stanchions, saddles, lids, clamps, and binding-streaks were piled up separately. Whenever it had been possible the bulging planks of the fragments of the ship's bottom were fitted together again; there was no confusion between the reef-gasket and the voyal-gasket, nor between the crow-feet and the tow-lines, nor between the pulleys of the backstays and the pulleys of the hawser, nor between the fragments of the streak and the fragments of the waist. A place had been reserved for the cat-harpings of the Durande, which had braced the shrouds of the topmast and the foot-hook bell-beam. Everything had its

place. The whole wreck was there classified and labeled. It resembled chaos in storage. A stay-sail, fastened down by large stones, though very much torn, it is true, covered over what the rain would otherwise have injured.

Shattered as was the bow of the Durande, Gilliatt succeeded in saving the two cat-heads with their three pulley-wheels.

He found the bowsprit, and had much difficulty in unrolling the gammoning; it adhered very closely, having been, according to custom, made by the help of the capstan during dry weather. However, Gilliatt succeeded in detaching it, for this thick hawser might be of great use to him.

He also brought in the small anchor, which had remained caught in the hollow of a reef where the falling tide exposed it to view.

In what had been the cabin of Tangrouille he found a piece of chalk, which he laid aside carefully. It might be necessary for making marks.

A leather fire-bucket and several small tubs, in a tolerably good condition, completed this stock of working materials.

All that remained of the Durande's cargo of coal was carried to the storehouse.

In a week this salvage of débris was finished; the rock was cleared, and the Durande

was lightened. Nothing was left in the wreck except the engine.

The portion of the forward planking which adhered to the after-part did not weigh down the hull of the boat. It hung there without tension, being supported by a rocky projection. Moreover, it was large and wide, and heavy to drag, and it would have crowded the storehouse. This strip of planking looked like a raft.

Gilliatt left it where it was.

Gilliatt, who was very thoughtful during this labor, looked in vain for the *poupée* (figure-head) of the Durande. It was one of the things which the waves had forever washed away.

Gilliatt would have given his two arms to find it, had he not such great need of them.

At the entrance of the storehouse and outside of it were two heaps of refuse—a heap of iron, good for forging, and a heap of wood, good for burning.

Gilliatt began work at daybreak. He took not a moment's rest, except the time when he slept.

The cormorants flying hither and thither watched him at his work.

X.

THE FORGE

The storehouse completed, Gilliatt constructed the forge.

The second cavity chosen by Gilliatt had within it a small nook, a kind of narrow passage, quite deep. He first thought of installing himself there, but the north wind blew so incessantly and so obstinately in this passage that he was obliged to relinquish the thought of inhabiting it. This draught had suggested to him the idea of the forge. Since this cavern could not be his chamber it should be his workshop. To make use of an obstacle is a great step toward success. The wind was Gilliatt's enemy. He attempted to make it his servant.

What is said of certain men—"aspiring to everything and good for nothing"—can be said of the hollows of the rock. They are not what they seem to be. Such a cavity in the rock would make a good bath-tub, but the water runs out of it through a crack. Here is

a chamber, but without a ceiling; another is a bed of moss, but wet; another an arm-chair, but of stone.

The forge which Gilliatt wished to establish was roughly hewn out by nature; but nothing could be rougher and more difficult work than to conquer this rude outline and render it manageable, and to transform this cavern into a workshop. With three or four large stones hollowed out in funnel shape, and terminating in a narrow fissure, chance had created a vast shapeless bellows, much more powerful than those huge old forge-bellows, fourteen feet long, which poured out at every puff ninety-eight thousand inches of air. This was quite another thing. The force of the hurricane cannot be calculated.

This excessive gale was a hindrance; it was difficult to regulate this wind.

The cavern had two drawbacks: the wind traversed it from side to side, so did the water.

It was not the sea-wave, but a little stream constantly running, which resembled a leak more than a torrent.

The foam—dashed constantly upon the rock by the surf and sometimes thrown more than a hundred feet in the air—had finally filled with sea-water a natural basin situated in the lofty rocks which overlooked the excavation. A little in the rear, the overflow of this

reservoir formed a slender waterfall, about the width of one's thumb, which fell from thirty to sixty feet down the wall of the cliff. Occasional rains enlarged it. From time to time a passing cloud emptied a shower into this inexhaustible reservoir, always overflowing. The water was brackish and unfit to drink, but clear, though salt. This fall trickled gracefully, drop by drop, from the extremities of the hairweed as from ends of hair.

Gilliatt conceived the idea of making use of this water to regulate the wind. By means of a funnel made of two or three strips of board, cut and arranged hastily, one of which he used as a plug, and by means of a very large tub placed beneath as a lower reservoir, without stays or balance-weight, only completing the contrivance by placing the mouth of the bellows above and air-holes below, Gilliatt, who was, as we have said, something of a blacksmith and also something of a machinist, succeeded in constructing in place of the forge-bellows which he did not possess, an apparatus less perfect than what is now known as a *cagniardelle*, but less rudimentary than what was formerly called in the Pyrenees a *trompe* (a water-blowing engine).

He had some rye meal, of which he made paste. He had some white hawser, of which he made oakum. With this oakum mixed with

paste, and a few chips of wood, he filled up all the fissures of the rock, leaving only a small air-passage made from the little end of a fuse, which he found in the Durande. It had been used as a fire-brand for the signal-gun. This current of air was directed horizontally upon a large slab where Gilliatt located the hearth of his forge; a stopper made from strands of rope served to close it when necessary.

After this, Gilliatt piled up coal and wood on this hearth, struck his steel on the rock itself, dropped the spark on a handful of oakum, and with the lighted oakum set fire to the wood and coal.

He tried the bellows; it worked admirably.

Gilliatt felt a Cyclopean pride; he was master of the air, of the water, and of the fire.

As master of the air, he had given a sort of lungs to the wind, created a breathing apparatus in the granite, and changed the draught into a bellows. As master of the water, he had converted the little cascade into a water-blowing engine. As master of the fire, he had caused flame to flash forth from this moist rock.

As the excavation was open to the sky at almost every point, the smoke escaped freely, blackening the overhanging wall of the rock. These rocks, which seemed destined forever to

be washed by the foam, were now covered with soot.

For his anvil Gilliatt took a large rock, of very close grain, about the required form and size. It was a very dangerous foundation to strike against, for it was liable to split. One of the extremities of this block, which was rounded and terminated in a point, could, in case of need, take the place of the bicorn conoid; but the other bicorn, the pyramidal bicorn, was wanting. It was the ancient stone anvil of the cave-dwellers. The surface, polished by the wind, offered almost the resistance of steel.

Gilliatt regretted that he had not brought his anvil. As he did not know that the Durande had been cut in two by the storm, he had hoped to find the carpenter's chest, and, in fact, all his tools, usually kept in the forecastle. But it was precisely the forecastle which had been carried away.

The two excavations in the rocks made use of by Gilliatt were near together. The storehouse and the forge communicated with each other.

Every evening, when his work was finished, Gilliatt supped on a piece of biscuit softened in water, on a sea-urchin, on a crab, or on some water-chestnuts,—these were all that could possibly be found among the rocks,—

and then, shivering like his knotted rope, he ascended to sleep in his hole in the Great Douvre.

The kind of abstraction in which Gilliatt lived was increased by the materiality of his occupation. Reality, taken in large doses, bewilders one. Bodily labor, with its numberless details, detracted nothing from his amazement at finding himself there engaged in his present occupation. Ordinarily, bodily fatigue is a thread which binds man to the earth; but the very peculiarity of the work undertaken by Gilliatt kept him in a sort of ideal twilight realm. It sometimes seemed to him as though he was dealing blows of the hammer on the clouds. At other times it seemed to him that his tools were weapons. He felt a strange sensation as though he were repressing or providing against some hidden attack. Untwisting ropes, unravelling threads from a sail, propping two planks against each other, seemed to him like fashioning engines of war. The thousand minute cares connected with this salvage at last seemed to him to resemble precautions taken against intelligent enemies, very thinly disguised and very transparent. Gilliatt could not find words to express his ideas, but he had the ideas. He felt himself less and less the workman and more and more the gladiator.

He was there to subdue the powers of nature. He almost understood it. A strange enlargement for his mind.

Moreover, there was around him, as far as eye could reach, the vast prospect of work done in vain. Nothing is more confusing than to behold the diffusion of forces at work in the unfathomable and boundless waste of waters. One seeks the object of these forces. Space always in motion, the untiring sea, clouds which are busily moving, the vast hidden effort,—all this agitation is a problem. What is accomplished by this perpetual trembling? What do these winds construct? What do these shocks build? These shocks, these sobbings, these howlings of the storm, what do they create? With what does this tumult occupy itself? The ebb and flow of these questions is as eternal as the tide. Gilliatt himself knew what he was about, but the agitation of the vast expanse confused and perplexed him with its unsolvable puzzle. Unconsciously to himself, mechanically, urgently, by pressure and penetration, and without any other result than being unconsciously and almost blindly dazzled, Gilliatt, the dreamer, made the vast and useless labor of the sea subservient to his own work. In fact, how could one be there and not examine and sound the mystery of the frightful, toilsome

waves? How could one avoid meditating, so far as one is capable of meditation, upon the vacillation of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the imperceptible wearing away of the rocks, the senseless vociferating of the four winds? How terrible to think of the perpetual recommencement, the ocean depths, the Danaïdes' clouds, and all that trouble for nothing!

For nothing—no! But oh thou Unknown! Thou alone knowest why.

XI.

A DISCOVERY

A rock near the coast is sometimes visited by men; a rock in the open sea, never. What could they expect to find there? It is not an island. No supplies of food can be found there; neither fruit-trees, pasturage, cattle, nor springs of drinking-water. It is a bare waste in the midst of a solitude; a rock with its steep sides above the water and sharp points under the water. Nothing can be found there except shipwreck.

These species of rocks, which were called in old sea dialect *isolés* (isolated), are, as we have remarked, peculiar places. The sea alone is there; it has its own way; nothing terrestrial disturbs it. Man terrorizes it; it mistrusts him; it hides from him what it is and what it does. Among the rocks it becomes bolder; man will not go there. The monologue of the waters will not be disturbed. It works at the rocks, repairs its wear and tear, sharpens their peaks, makes them rugged, or renews

them, keeps them in order. It undertakes the piercing of the rock, it wears away the soft stone, lays bare the hard stone, removes the flesh, leaves the skeleton, rummages, dissects, perforates, bores, makes channels, puts invisible parts in communication with each other, fills the rocks with cells, imitates the sponge on a grand scale, hollows the interior, sculptures the exterior. In that hidden mountain on which the rocks rest it makes for itself caves, sanctuaries, and palaces; it possesses an indescribably hideous, and at the same time splendid, vegetation, composed of floating plants which bite, and of monsters which take root, and it buries all this dreadful magnificence in the gloom of its depths. Nothing on the isolated rock watches the sea, nothing espies it, and nothing interferes with it. It develops there, at its leisure, the mysterious side of its nature which man cannot understand. There it deposits its living and horrible secretions. All the unknown wonders of the sea are there.

Promontories, capes, cliffs, headlands, reefs, and breakers are, let us insist upon it, veritable constructions. Geological formation amounts to little when compared to oceanic formation. The rocks, those homes of the wave, those pyramids and spouts of foam, belong to a mysterious art of enormous dimensions which the author of this book has somewhere called

"the Art of Nature." There the accidental seems to be the result of volition. These constructions are multiform. They possess the intricacy of the coral formation, the sublimity of the cathedral, the exaggeration of the pagoda, the amplitude of the mountain, the delicacy of the jewel, the horror of the sepulchre. They have perforations like a wasp's nest, dens like a menagerie, tunnels like a mole-hill, dungeons like a fortress, and ambuscades like a camp. They have doors, but they are barricaded; columns, but they are mutilated; towers, but they are leaning; bridges, but they are broken. Their compartments are unaccommodating. This one is only adapted for birds, that one for fish. They are impassable. Their architectural style is variable and inconsistent, at one time building according to the law of gravity, then contrary to it, breaking off, stopping short, beginning as an archivolt, ending as an architrave, block on block; Encelados is the architect. An extraordinary system of dynamics exhibits here its problems, solved. Alarming pendentives threaten to fall, but they do not drop. It is impossible to tell how these dizzy structures remain fastened. At every point they overhang and deviate from the perpendicular; there are chasms, meaningless interruptions; the law governing this Babel is

unfathomable; the Unknown, that great architect, plans nothing, and succeeds in everything. Rocks piled in confusion compose a huge monument; they maintain their equilibrium without apparent reason. More than solidity, it is eternity. At the same time, order is wanting. The tumult of the wave seems to have communicated itself to the granite. A rock is the tempest petrified. Nothing is more impressive than this wild architecture, always crumbling, always standing. All things there both help and oppose each other. It is a conflict of opposing lines, resulting in an edifice. One recognizes there the collaboration of these two enemies, the ocean and the hurricane.

This architecture has its terrible masterpieces, of which the Douvres rocks was one.

The sea had constructed and perfected it with terrible earnestness. The angry waves washed it. It was hideous, treacherous, dark, full of caves.

A veinous system of submarine caverns ramified through these unfathomable depths. Many of the orifices of this labyrinth of passages were dry at low tide. A man might enter there, but at his risk and peril.

In order to accomplish his purpose, Gilliatt was obliged to explore all these grottoes, not one of which was not frightful. Everywhere

in these caves was produced, with the exaggerated dimensions of the ocean, that aspect of the slaughter-house and butcher-shop, strangely imprinted on the inner walls of the Douvres. Whoever has not seen an excavation of this kind on the external granite wall cannot form an idea of these frightful frescoes of nature.

These wild grottoes were treacherous; one must not tarry there too long. The high tide filled them to their roofs.

Rock limpets and many products of the sea abounded there.

They were encumbered with boulders piled in heaps at the bottom of these caverns. Many of these weighed more than a ton; they were of all sizes and colors; the majority were of a bloody hue. Some were covered with a hairy and glutinous seaweed, and seemed like large green moles burrowing in the rock.

Many of these caves terminated abruptly in the form of a demi-cupola. Others, arteries of a mysterious circulation, extended further in the interior of the rock, making tortuous and black fissures. Such were the passages which penetrated this abyss. They gradually contracted until they were too small for a man to pass through. A lighted torch faintly revealed the dripping interior.

One day in his search Gilliatt ventured into one of these fissures. The condition of the tide was propitious. It was a beautiful day, calm and sunny. The danger was not heightened by fear of any accident from the sea.

Two necessities, as we have just remarked, compelled Gilliatt to undertake these explorations: to seek for useful fragments to aid in rescuing the wreck, and to find crabs and lobsters for food. The shell-fish began to fail him on the Douvres.

The fissure became narrower, and the passage was almost impassable. Gilliatt saw daylight beyond. He made great exertion; he threw himself into the passage and twisted himself in as far as he could.

Without knowing it, he was in the interior of the very same rock on which Clubin had driven the Durande. Gilliatt was beneath this point. Although the rock was abrupt and inaccessible from the exterior, its interior was hollow. It was full of galleries, pits, and chambers, like the tomb of an Egyptian king. This network of caverns was one of the most complicated of all that labyrinth, the work of the water, the mining done by the indefatigable sea. The branches of the subterranean maze probably communicated with the immense expanse of water on the exterior by more than one opening, some of

them gaping at the surface of the water; others, profound invisible funnels.

It was quite close to this place that Clubin had thrown himself into the sea, but Gilliatt did not know that.

In this cavern of crocodiles, where, however, they were not to be dreaded, Gilliatt twisted, climbed, hit his forehead, bent low, straightened out again, lost his footing, regained the ground, and, in fact, advanced laboriously.

By degrees the gallery widened, a glimmer of light was seen, and Gilliatt suddenly made his entrance into an extraordinary cavern.

XII.

THE INTERIOR OF A SUBMARINE EDIFICE

This gleam of light came very opportunely.

One step more, and Gilliatt would have fallen into water that might have been unfathomable. The water in these caverns is so chilly that the strongest swimmers often immediately succumb to its paralyzing effect.

Moreover, there is no means of climbing by clinging to the rocky walls between which one is immured.

Gilliatt stopped short. The crevice from which he had emerged terminated in a narrow and slippery projection, a sort of corbel in the perpendicular rock. Gilliatt leaned his back against the wall and looked about him.

He was in a large cave. Above him he saw something which resembled the interior of a huge skull. This skull had the appearance of having been recently dissected. The dripping mouldings of the striated rocks of the vault resembled the branching fibres and the jagged sutures of a bony case. A ceiling of

rock, a floor of water; the waves of the sea, confined between the four inner walls of the cavern, appeared like large, quivering flagstones. The grotto was closed on every side; not an opening, not an air-hole, not a crack in the walls, not even a fissure in the vault. All this was lighted from below, through the water. It was an indescribably sombre light.

Gilliatt, the pupils of whose eyes had become dilated during his passage through the dark corridor, was able to distinguish everything in this dim light.

He was familiar, through repeated visits, with the caves of Plémont in Jersey, the Creux-Maillé in Guernsey, and the Boutiques in Serk (so named because the smugglers were in the habit of depositing their merchandise there); but not one of those marvelous caverns could compare with the subterranean and submarine chamber into which he had just penetrated.

Under the water, at his feet, Gilliatt perceived a sort of submerged arch. This arch, a natural ogive fashioned by the waves, stood forth conspicuously between its two deep and dark supports. It was through this submerged portal that the light from the open sea entered the cavern—a strange daylight shooting up through the deep.

This light spread out beneath the waters like a large fan, and was reflected on the rocks. Its rectilinear rays, separated into long straight bands on the opaque bottom, grew brighter or darker from one turning to another, and seemed as though refracted through plates of glass. There was daylight in this cave, but it was a strange light. It in no respect resembled our light. It seemed as though one had stepped on another planet. The light was a puzzle; it appeared as though it might have been the glaucous light which shines from the eye of the sphinx. This cavern resembled the interior of an enormous and magnificent death's-head; the vault was the skull; the arch, the mouth; the sockets of the eyes were missing. This mouth, alternately swallowing and giving forth the ebb and flow of the tide, yawned in the full noonday. Drinking the light and vomiting bitterness,—a type of certain intelligent but wicked beings. The ray of sunlight, in crossing the portal, was obstructed by the glassy thickness of the sea-water and became green, like a ray of Aldebaran. The water permeated by this liquid light looked like a melted emerald. A shade of aqua-marine of marvelous delicacy spread a soft hue throughout the cavern. The vault, with its almost cerebral lobes and its wandering ramifications, resembled

the branching of nerves, and gave out a delicate light, like that of chrysoprase. The rippling of the waves reflected on the ceiling, dissolved and formed again unceasingly, enlarging and contracting their golden meshes with a mysterious dancing motion. This produced a weird impression; the question might arise, What booty or what hope caused this net of living fire to be so joyous? From the projections of the dome and from the rough parts of the rock hung long and delicate plants probably bathing their roots, through cracks in the granite, in a sheet of water above, and shedding from their extremities, one after the other, a drop of water, a pearl. These pearls made a gentle sound as they fell into the abyss. Nothing more charming could be imagined, nothing more mournful could be found.

It was an indescribable palace of contented Death.

XIII.

WHAT COULD BE SEEN AND GLANCED AT THERE

A gloom, dazzling to the eyes, such was this wonderful cavern.

The beating of the sea was felt within this grotto. The oscillation of the water outside raised and then depressed the sheet of water in the interior, with the regularity of a respiration. It was easy to imagine a mysterious soul in this great green diaphragm rising and falling in silence.

The water was magically transparent, and Gilliatt was able to distinguish, at various depths, submerged platforms, surfaces of protruding rocks of a gradually deepening green. Certain dark hollows were probably unfathomable.

In the two walls of the submarine portal outlines of elliptic arches were seen, their interiors filled with shadows, which indicated little lateral caverns, side aisles of the central cavern, which might, perhaps, be accessible at the lowest tide.

The ceilings of these winding caverns inclined at more or less of an angle. Little beaches a few feet wide, laid bare by the action of the water, stretched inward and were lost in these recesses. Here and there grasses more than two yards long swayed under the water, like hair waving in the wind. Forests of seaweed could be seen.

Above and below the surface of the water, the entire wall of the cavern, from top to bottom, from the vault to its disappearance into invisible depths, was decked with that prodigious efflorescence of the ocean so rarely seen by the eye of man that the old Spanish navigators used to call it *praderias del mar* (meadows of the ocean). A luxuriant moss of every shade of olive concealed and enlarged the projections of granite. From each overhanging point swung thin strips of crimped seaweed which fishermen use as barometers. The gentle breeze in the cavern waved these glossy bands.

Beneath this vegetation the rarest jewels of the casket of the ocean lay both hidden and displayed to view—eburnæ, strombi, mitres, helmet-shells, trumpet-shells, wheals, struthiolaires, and turreted cerites. The bell-shaped limpets, like microscopic huts, adhered to the rocks in every direction, and grouped themselves in villages, through the streets of which

prowled the oscabrions, those beetles of the sea. As there were few stones in this grotto, shell-fish took refuge there. They resemble great lords, who, clad in embroidered and finely braided robes, avoid the rude and uncivil contact of the populace of pebbles. In certain places, beneath the water, glittering heaps of these shells emitted an indescribable irradiance through which a glimpse could be seen of a medley of azure tints, of mother-of-pearl and golden hues of every color in the water.

Upon the side of the cavern, a little above the water-line, a magnificent and singular plant attached itself like a border to the tapestry of seaweed, prolonging and completing it. This plant, fibrous, tufted, inextricably twisted, and almost black, presented to the sight large surfaces, confused and dark and dotted all over with countless little flowers of the color of lapis-lazuli. Beneath the water these flowers seemed to be on fire, and one fancied that they resembled blue embers. Above the water they were flowers, beneath it they resembled sapphires, so that the sheet of water as it rose and inundated the lower part of the grotto, which was clothed with these plants, covered the rock with carbuncles.

At every swelling of the wave, which

expanded like a lung, these submerged flowers became resplendent, and at every subsidence they became dull again,—a melancholy resemblance to destiny. Inspiration, which constitutes life, is followed by expiration, which constitutes death.

One of the marvels of this cavern was the rock itself. This rock sometimes appeared like a wall, then an arch, then again a prow or pilaster; it was rough and bare in places, while, just alongside, it was carved by the most delicate and natural chiseling. An indescribable intelligence was mingled with the meaningless mass of granite. What a wonderful artist is the abyss! Such a square space of wall covered with round protuberances in various positions seemed like a vague bas-relief. Standing before this sculpture, with its obscure designs, one could imagine Prometheus roughly sketching for Michael Angelo. It seemed as though genius, by a few blows of the mallet, might have finished what the giant had begun. In other places the rock was embossed like a Saracenic shield, or inlaid with niello like a Florentine fountain-basin. It contained panels resembling Corinthian bronze, then arabesques, as on the door of a mosque; in places it also resembled Runic stones, with obscure and mysterious imprints of nails. Plants with twisted branches and

tendrils crossing and recrossing on the golden background of lichens, covered it with filigree work. This grotto somewhat resembled an Alhambra. It was a union of barbarism and the goldsmith's art, in the imposing and shapeless architecture,—the effect of chance.

The magnificent mould in the rocks of the sea covered the angles of granite with velvet. The walls were festooned with large flowering tropical creepers skilfully balanced. It seemed as though their beautiful arrangement had been suggested by intelligence.

Odd bouquets of wall-pellitories showed their tufts appropriately and tastefully. Every beauty was there which could be found in a cave. The wondrous light, like that of Eden, which shone from under the water,—at once a marine twilight and a ray from paradise,—softened all lineaments into a sort of visionary haziness. Each wave acted as a prism. The outlines of things under these iridescent waves presented the chromatic effect of optic lenses made too convex; solar spectra floating under the water. One could imagine that he saw fragments of submerged rainbows trembling in this auroral transparency. Elsewhere, in other corners, a sort of moonlight penetrated the water. All these splendors seemed amalgamated there for the purpose of performing some indescribably hidden and

dark deed. Nothing could be more confusing or more puzzling than the display in this cavern. Enchantment ruled. The fantastic vegetation and the rude stratification united and harmonized. This union of ill-assorted things was happy. The branches clung, although they had the appearance of touching lightly. The native rock and the wild flower embraced each other enthusiastically. The capitals and ornaments of massive pillars were decorated with frail, quivering garlands, which reminded one of fairy fingers tickling the feet of behemoths, and the rock sustained the plant and the plant embraced the rock with wonderful grace.

The result of these deformities, so mysteriously adjusted, was an indescribably majestic beauty. The works of nature, not less supreme than the works of genius, are complete, and force themselves upon our notice. The mind obeys their unexpected and imperious commands; one is conscious of a forethought beyond that of man, and they are never more impressive than when they suddenly cause something exquisitely beautiful to emerge from the terrible.

This unknown grotto was, so to speak, and if such an expression is admissible, sidereal-ized. The most unforeseen effects of stupor were felt there. The light which illuminated

this vault was like the light of the Apocalypse: one did not feel quite sure that it existed. A realistic impression of the impossible lay before one's eyes. On looking at it, and touching it, one knew one was there; nevertheless, it was difficult to believe in it.

Was it daylight which entered through this window under the sea? Was it water which trembled in this obscure pool? Were these arches and portals not heavenly clouds imitating a cavern? What stone was this beneath one's feet? Would not this shaft disintegrate and pass away in smoke? What was this jewelry of shells which could be faintly discerned? How far away were we from life, from the earth, from mankind? What were these wondrous beauties mingled with these gloomy depths? An emotion peculiar and almost holy, to which was added the sweet restlessness of the plants at the bottom of the sea.

At the extreme end of this oblong cavern, under a singularly well-formed Cyclopean archivolt, in an almost imperceptible recess—a sort of cave within a cave, of tabernacle within a sanctuary—which lay behind a sheet of clear green light interposed like the veil of a temple, could be seen, rising above the water, a square stone somewhat like an altar. The water surrounded this stone on all sides.

It seemed as though a goddess had just descended from it. One could not help imagining that upon this altar and under this crypt stood some heavenly Venus, eternally pensive, who would vanish at the approach of man. It was difficult to think of this majestic cavern without a vision within it; the apparition evoked by memory reconstructed itself; a stream of delicate light on the dimly outlined shoulders, a forehead bathed in the brightness of dawn, an oval Olympian face, a mysterious roundness of the bosom, chaste arms, hair floating in the morning light, inexpressibly beautiful hips palely outlined in the sacred mist, formed like a nymph, a look of a virgin, a Venus rising out of the sea, an Eve springing from chaos—such was the dream which filled the mind. A phantom was probably there. A nude woman with a star within her was probably this moment upon the altar. On this pedestal, whence emanated an inexpressible ecstasy, one could readily imagine a white, living form. In the midst of the mute adoration of this cavern the mind pictured to itself an Amphitrite, a Tethys, some Diana capable of loving, a statue of the ideal, formed of radiance, gazing sweetly on the gloom. At her departure she had left in the cavern this brightness, a sort of perfumed light which had emanated from her star-like

form. The dazzling radiance of this phantom was no longer there; one could not see this form made only to be seen by the invisible; but one felt its presence, and was seized with that trembling which is voluptuous delight. The goddess was absent, but the divinity was present.

The beauty of the cave seemed made for this presence. It was for the sake of this deity, this fairy of pearls, this queen of the winds, this graceful creature born of the sea,—it was for her sake, at least one fancied so, that the subterranean cave was sacredly walled in, so that nothing could ever disturb the respected privacy and the majestic silence which surrounded this divine phantom.

Gilliatt, who was sometimes able to prophesy the events of nature, was troubled with confused thoughts.

All at once, a few feet below him, in the charming transparency of this water, which resembled dissolved jewelry, he perceived an indescribable object. He saw a sort of long rag moving in the oscillating waves. This rag did not float, it sailed; it had a purpose, it was going somewhere, it was moving rapidly; it was shaped like a fool's-cap with points; these points, which were flabby, waved to and fro. It seemed to be covered with a dust which it was impossible to moisten. It was

more than horrible; it was filthy. This thing seemed somewhat chimerical; it must be a living creature, unless it might be an illusion. It seemed to be directing its course toward the dark portion of the cavern, where, at last, it disappeared in the depths. The density of the water threw a shadow over it.

This sinister outline glided away and disappeared.

BOOK TWO

LABOR

I.

THE RESOURCES OF ONE WHO IS DESTITUTE OF EVERYTHING

It was difficult for men to extricate themselves from this cave. The entrance to it was not easy, and the exit was still more difficult. Nevertheless, Gilliatt extricated himself from it, but he never returned. He had found nothing there of which he was in search, and he had no time to be curious.

He immediately put the forge in operation. He needed tools, so he made them himself.

The wreck furnished him with fuel, the water gave him motive power, the wind acted as his bellows, a stone took the place of an anvil; instinct took the place of art; will, the place of power.

Gilliatt entered enthusiastically into this dreary work.

The weather seemed to be favorable for it. It continued dry and almost free from equinoctial gales. The month of March had come, but quietly. The days grew longer. The

blue of the sky, the gentleness of all the movements of the vast expanse, the serenity of the noonday, seemed to exclude every bad intention. The sea shone brilliantly in the sunlight. A preliminary kiss seasons treachery. The sea is prodigal of such caresses. When one has anything to do with that element, one must beware of its smile.

There was little wind; the hydraulic bellows worked all the better for it. An excess of wind would have been a hindrance rather than a help.

Gilliatt had a saw; he made himself a file; with the saw he attacked the wood, and with the file he attacked the metal; then he availed himself of the blacksmith's two iron hands, the pincers and tongs: the pincers are used for holding and the tongs for manipulating; the one takes the place of the wrist, the other, of the fingers. In machinery one part depends upon the other. By degrees Gilliatt provided himself with auxiliaries and constructed his implements. From a piece of sheet-iron he made a cover for the hearth of the forge.

One of his principal labors was sorting and repairing the pulleys. He put in order the blocks and sheaves of the tackle. He cut off the splinters of all the broken joists, and shaped the ends afresh; he had, as we have

said, to help him in his carpentry, a quantity of timbers, stored and arranged according to their forms, dimensions and kind,—the oak on one side, the pine on the other; curved pieces, like the riders, separated from the straight pieces, like the binding-strakes. They constituted his reserve of fulcrums and levers, of which he might at any time stand in great need.

Anyone who intends to construct hoisting-tackle, should provide himself with beams and tackle-blocks; but these are not sufficient, he should have cordage. Gilliatt repaired the ropes and the stream-cables. He ravelled the torn sails, and succeeded in extracting from them an excellent rope-yarn, of which he made twine; with this twine he joined the ropes. The disadvantage of these sutures was that they were liable to rot, and therefore these cords and cables must be speedily used. Gilliatt had only been able to make white rope; he had no tar.

The ropes being repaired, he mended the chains.

Thanks to the lateral point of the stone anvil, which took the place of the conical bicorn, he was able to forge rude but solid rings. By means of these rings he united the ends of the broken chains, thereby lengthening them.

It is more than difficult to forge alone and unaided; nevertheless, he succeeded. It is true that he had only to forge small pieces, such as he was able to handle with one hand, by means of the tongs, while he hammered them with the other hand.

He broke the round iron bars of the captain's bridge into fragments, and forged the two extremities of each piece; on one end he forged a point and on the other a large flat head, by means of which he manufactured large nails, about a foot long. These nails, much used in constructing bridges, are useful for fastening things to the rocks.

Why did Gilliatt take all this trouble? Let us see.

He was often obliged to sharpen his axe and the teeth of his saw. For the saw he had made a saw-file.

He occasionally used the capstan of the Durande. The hook of the chain broke. Gilliatt forged another.

By the aid of his pincers and tongs, and by using his chisel as a screw-driver, he attempted to unscrew the two paddle-wheels of the ship, an undertaking in which he succeeded. It should not be forgotten that this was rendered possible by a peculiarity in the construction of these wheels. The paddle-boxes which had covered them served to pack

them in. With the boards of the paddle-boxes Gilliatt constructed two cases in which he deposited, piece by piece, the two wheels, carefully numbered.

His piece of chalk proved of great value to him for this numbering.

He placed the two cases on the firmest part of the deck of the Durande.

These preliminaries finished, Gilliatt found himself confronted with his greatest difficulty. The problem of the engine must be considered.

It had been possible to unfasten the wheels, but not to take apart the engine.

In the first place, Gilliatt did not understand this engine very well. By working at it blindly he might do some irreparable injury. Then, even in attempting to take it apart piece by piece, if he had been so imprudent, he would have needed other tools than those which could be fashioned with a cavern for a forge, a draught of air for a bellows, and a stone for an anvil. In attempting to take the machinery apart, he would run the risk of ruining it.

Here one might believe one's self absolutely face to face with the impossible.

It seemed as though Gilliatt were driven to the foot of that wall called the impossible.

What was he to do?

II.

HOW SHAKESPEARE AND ÆSCHYLUS CAN MEET

Gilliatt had a plan of his own.

Since the time of that mason-carpenter of Salbris, who, in the sixteenth century, when science was in its infancy (long before Amontons had discovered the first law of friction, or Lahire the second, or Coulomb the third), without advice, without a guide, with no other aid than that of a child (his son), with ill-shaped tools, resolved at one stroke, during the lowering of the "great clock" of the Church of La Charité-sur-Loire, five or six problems of statics and dynamics, entangled like wheels in a block of carts and presenting a simultaneous obstacle,—since the time of this grand and marvelous achievement of the man who was able, without breaking even a thread of brass wire, without even injuring any of the gearing, to lower, all in one piece, by a prodigious simplification, from the second story of the bell-tower to the first, that massive cage of the hours, made entirely of iron and brass, "as large as the room of the night watchman," with its movement, its cylinders, its

caskets, its barrels, its hooks and weights, the fusee of its hour and minute hands, its horizontal pendulum, its regulators, its reels of large and small chains, its stone weights, one of which weighed five hundred pounds, its striking apparatus and chimes, its metal figure which struck the hours with his hammer,—since the time of this miracle, performed by this person whose name is now forgotten, nothing similar to what Gilliatt was meditating had ever been attempted. The undertaking which Gilliatt was contemplating was perhaps even more difficult—that is to say, more wonderful.

The weight and the exceeding intricacy of the difficulties were no less in rescuing the engine of the Durande than in lowering the clock of Charité-sur-Loire.

The Gothic carpenter was assisted by his son; Gilliatt was alone.

Crowds who had come from Meung-sur-Loire, from Nevers, and even from Orleans, were able, if necessary, to assist the mason of Salbris, and could encourage him with their kindly voices. Gilliatt was surrounded by no sound but that of the wind, by no crowd but that of the waves.

Nothing equals the timidity of ignorance, unless it be its rashness. When ignorance becomes daring, it is because she feels a guiding spirit within her. This guiding spirit is the

intuition of the true, and is clearer, perhaps, in the simple-minded than in the more cultured.

Ignorance invites experiment. Ignorance is a reverie, and this curious reverie has a force of its own. Knowledge sometimes disconcerts and often dissuades. Had Gama been a learned man he would have retreated before the Cape of Storms. Had Columbus been a good cosmographer, he would not have discovered America. The second successful climber of Mount Blanc was a learned man named Saussure; the first was a shepherd, Balmat.

These instances, let us remark, are exceptions which detract nothing from science, which still continues its sway. The ignorant man may discover, but the learned man alone can invent.

The sloop was still anchored in l'Homme creek, where the sea had not disturbed her. It will be remembered that Gilliatt had arranged everything so that he should have free communication with his bark. He visited the sloop and measured her beam carefully in several places, but particularly her midship-beam. Then he returned to the Durande and measured the large diameter of the bottom of the engine. This diameter, minus the wheels, of course, was two feet less than the midship-beam of the sloop. Hence the engine could go into the sloop.

But how could it be put in?

III.

GILLIATT'S MASTERPIECE COMES TO THE RESCUE OF LETHIERRY'S MASTERPIECE

For some time to come any fisherman who would have been foolish enough to loiter about this coast at this season would have been rewarded for his hardihood by the sight of a curious object between the Douvres.

This is what he would have seen: four stout joists, equally spaced, extending from one Douvre to the other, and forced, as it were, between the rock, which is the firmest of all substances. On the side of the Little Douvre their extremities were buttressed against projections of the rock; on the side of the Great Douvre these extremities must have been violently driven into the rocky wall by blows from the hammer of some powerful workman who had stood upon the very beam which he was forcing in. These beams were a little longer than the width of the passage between the rocks; hence the firmness of their hold,

and also their slanting position. They touched the Great Douvre at an acute and the Little Douvre at an obtuse angle. Their inclination was slight, but unequal, which was a fault. Except for this defect, they seemed to be arranged to receive the planking of a deck. To these were attached four beams, four sets of hoisting apparatus, each one furnished with its tie and laniard, having this bold and strange characteristic, that the tackle-block with two sheaves was at one extremity of the joist and the simple pulleys at the opposite extremity. This separation, too great for safety, was probably necessary for the accomplishment of the undertaking. The tackle-blocks were strong and the pulleys solid. To these tackle-blocks were attached ropes, which, viewed from a distance, looked like threads, while beneath this aerial apparatus of tackle and carpentry the massive wreck of the Durande seemed to be suspended by these threads.

Suspended! no, not yet. Directly under the beams eight openings had been made in the deck,—four to the larboard and four to the starboard of the engine,—and eight other openings had been made beneath them, through the keel. The ropes, descending vertically from the four tackle-blocks, passed through the deck and out at the keel through

the openings to starboard; then, passing under the keel and under the engine, they found their way back into the ship through the openings to larboard, and, reascending, traversing the deck again, returned and were coiled around the four pulleys of the beams, where they were seized by a sort of burton and made into one bundle, bound to a single cable, which a single arm could direct. The hook and the dead-eye, through which this single cable passed and was wound, completed the apparatus and kept it in check. This combination forced the four tacklings to work together, and acted as a complete check upon the suspended forces, which became a sort of dynamic rudder in the hands of the pilot of the undertaking, maintaining the rigging in equilibrium.

The very ingenious adjustment of this small tackle possessed some of the simplified contrivances of the Weston pulley in use to-day, and it also resembled the old-style polyspast of Vitruvius. Gilliatt had invented this, although he had never heard of Vitruvius, who was no longer living, nor of Weston, who at that time had not been born. The length of the cables varied according to the unequal slope of the beams, which, to some extent, corrected this defect. The ropes were dangerous, and the untarred cables were liable

to break. Chains would have been better, but then chains would not have run readily on the tackle-blocks.

All this apparatus, defective as it was, was wonderful when we consider that it was the work of one man, unaided.

To conclude, we will abridge the description. Let it be understood that we will omit many details which would have rendered the account clear to practical mechanics, but obscure to others.

The top of the smoke-stack of the engine passed between the two middle beams.

Gilliatt, without being aware of it, unconsciously copied something of which he had never heard. Three centuries later he constructed the same mechanism invented by the Salbris carpenter,—a mechanism rudimentary and incorrect, and formidable to anyone who should attempt to manage it.

Let us remark here, that even the greatest faults do not prevent a machine from working after a fashion. It limps, but it goes.

The obelisk in the square of Saint Peter's in Rome was erected contrary to all the rules of statics. The carriage of the Czar Peter was so constructed that it appeared as if about to overturn at any minute; but it moved on, notwithstanding. How many faults there were in the Marly machine! Everything in

it was badly placed. Nevertheless, it supplied Louis XIV with water.

At all events, Gilliatt had confidence. He even anticipated success so far as to fasten in the bulwarks of the sloop, on the day when he returned to measure it, two pairs of iron rings, on either side of the boat, opposite each other, spaced in the same way as the four rings on the Durande, to which were fastened the four chains of the smokestack.

Gilliatt evidently had a very complete and well-defined plan. Having all the chances against him, he had determined, on his part, to take every precaution.

He did some things which seemed useless—a sign of attentive forethought.

His manner of proceeding would, as we have already remarked, have puzzled an observer, even one skilled in such matters.

A witness of his labors who might have seen him, for example, using unheard-of efforts, and at the risk of breaking his neck, hammering eight or ten of the large nails, which he had forged, in the base of the Douvres at the entrance of the defile in the rock, might have had difficulty in understanding the object of these nails, and would probably have wondered what was the use of going to all this trouble.

If he could have seen Gilliatt, later on,

measuring the portion of the bulwark of the bow,—which, let it be remembered, remained fastened to the wreck,—then could have seen him attaching a strong stream-cable to the upper edge of this portion, cutting away with his hatchet the displaced woodwork which held it there, and dragging it out of the defile, the receding tide pushing the lower part, while Gilliatt was extricating the upper part; finally, with great difficulty, fastening by means of the stream-cable this heavy mass of planks and beams, which was wider than the entrance of the defile, to the nails fastened in the base of the Little Douvre, the observer would, perhaps, have understood still less, and would have said to himself that, if Gilliatt wished to facilitate his undertaking by clearing the passage of the Douvres of this encumbrance, it would only have been necessary to let it fall into the water, which would have carried it away with the current.

Gilliatt probably had his reasons.

In order to fasten the nails in the base of the Douvres, he took advantage of all the fissures in the granite, enlarging them when necessary; in the first place fastening wedges of wood in them, into which he afterwards drove the iron nails. He commenced the same preparation in the two cliffs which rose at the other extremity of the narrow

passage of rock, on the eastern side; he filled in all their crevices with wooden plugs, as though he wished to keep them also in readiness to hold the nails; but this appeared to be merely a precaution, for he drove no nails there. It will be understood that, because of his poverty, he could not prudently expend his materials except in proportion to his needs, and at the moment when the necessity presented itself. This was another complication added to so many difficulties.

As soon as one thing was accomplished another difficulty arose. Gilliatt passed unhesitatingly from one to the other, and resolutely accomplished this giant stride.

IV.

SUB RE

(Under the Pressure of Circumstances)

The man who did all these things presented a terrifying appearance.

In accomplishing this great task Gilliatt expended all his strength at once and regained it with difficulty.

In consequence of privations on one hand, and lassitude on the other, he had become attenuated. His hair and beard had grown. He had only one shirt which was not in tatters. He was barefooted, the wind having carried off one of his shoes and the sea the other. Splinters from the rude and very dangerous anvil which he used had made small wounds, marks of toil. These wounds, scratches rather than wounds, were only superficial; still they were irritated by the keen air and the salt water.

He was hungry, thirsty, and cold.

His can of fresh water was empty. His rye flour had been used or eaten. Nothing remained but a little biscuit.

He broke it with his teeth, having no water to soften it.

Little by little, and day by day, his strength decreased.

The dreadful rocks were consuming his life.

How to obtain water to drink was a problem; how to get anything to eat was a problem; how to find a place to sleep was a problem.

He ate when he was fortunate enough to find an isopod or a crab; he drank when he saw a sea-bird descend upon a point of rock. He would climb there to find a hollow containing a little fresh water. He drank after the bird, but sometimes with the bird, for the gulls and sea-mews having become accustomed to him, no longer flew away at his approach. Even in his greatest need for food Gilliatt did not molest them. He had, as will be remembered, a superstition about birds. The birds, on their part, now that his hair was rough and wild and his beard long, were not afraid of him; his changed appearance reassured them; they no longer thought him a man, but a beast.

The birds and Gilliatt were now good friends. These unfortunate creatures came to each other's assistance. As long as Gilliatt's rye lasted he crumbed for them little pieces of the cake which he made; so now, in their turn, they showed him where water could be found.

He ate the shell-fish raw. Shell-fish quench thirst to a certain extent. He cooked the crabs; having no pot, he roasted them between two stones, heated red-hot in the fire, after the manner of the savages of the Faroë islands.

Meanwhile, signs of the equinoctial season had begun to appear; rain had fallen—an adverse rain. No showers, no steady torrents, but long, slender, icy, piercing needles, which penetrated Gilliatt's clothing to the very skin, and his skin even to his bones. It was a rain which yielded little water for drinking, but at the same time it drenched him.

Chary of assistance, prodigal of misery, such was the character of this rain, unworthy of heaven. It poured down on Gilliatt both day and night for over a week. This rain was very distressing.

At night, in his hole in the rock, sleep only came to him from the exhaustion which follows labor. The large sea-gnats stung him. He awoke covered with blotches.

He suffered from a fever, which sustained him; fever is an aid which kills. He instinctively chewed the lichen or sucked the blades of the wild scurvy-grass—meagre shoots of the dry crevices in the rock. Besides, he paid but little attention to his own sufferings. He had no time to take his mind from his work to think of himself, Gilliatt. The engine of

the Durande was in good condition. That sufficed for him.

In order to carry on his work, it frequently became necessary for him to plunge into the water and swim, then again to work standing. He entered the water and emerged from it as readily as a person passes from one room of his apartments to another.

His clothing was never dry. It was soaked with incessant rain, and with sea-water, which never dries. Gilliatt was perpetually wet.

Living in wet clothing is a habit which may be acquired. The groups of poor Irish, consisting of old men, mothers, young girls almost naked, and children, who pass the winter in the open air, in the rain and snow, huddled together at the corners of houses in the streets of London, live and die in this condition.

Gilliatt endured the strange torture of being at the same time both wet and thirsty. From time to time he sucked the sleeve of his jacket. The fire which he made scarcely warmed him; fire in the open air is only half a comfort,—we burn on one side and freeze on the other. Gilliatt was in a perspiration and shivered at the same time.

Everything around him offered resistance in a dreadful sort of silence. He felt himself at enmity with all his surroundings.

There is a gloomy *non possumus* (we are not able) in nature.

The inertia of matter is a gloomy warning. A mysterious persecution surrounded Gilliatt. He was subject to fever and chills. The fire scorched him, the water froze him, thirst made him feverish, the wind tore his clothing, hunger gnawed at his stomach. He suffered the oppression of an exhausting combination of circumstances. Obstacles, silent, vast, possessing the apparent irresponsibility of fate, but of an inexpressibly wild unanimity, converged from all points to Gilliatt. He felt them bearing down inexorably upon him. There was no way of escape. It seemed as though some living creature was persecuting him. He was conscious of a dark repelling power and of hatred, which were combining their efforts to subdue him.

He could have fled at will, but since he remained, he was obliged to contend against this impenetrable hostility. Not being able to banish it, he subdued it. It? The unknown power. It held him fast; it restrained him; it overpowered him; it deprived him of breath. He was being murdered by the invisible power. Each day the mysterious screw was tightened one turn.

Gilliatt's situation in the midst of these restless elements resembled an unfair duel in

which there is a traitor. He was surrounded by a combination of obscure forces. He felt that they wished to get rid of him. It is thus that the glacier chases the wandering boulder.

While scarcely appearing to touch him, this latent combination had reduced him to rags, had made the blood flow, had pursued him to the last extremity, and had, so to speak, disabled him before the combat. However, he worked none the less steadily on that account; but in proportion as the work progressed the workman found himself breaking down. It might have been imagined that this wilderness feared his lofty soul, and had resolved to destroy the man. Gilliatt held firm and waited. The sea had commenced this by exhausting him. What would it do next?

The double Douvre,—that dragon made of granite lying in wait in the open sea,—had admitted Gilliatt. It had allowed him to enter and do what he wished. This reception resembled the hospitality of devouring jaws.

The wilderness, the boundless expanse, space which so often refuses to obey man, the silent working of phenomena as they follow their paths, the great general law of things implacable and passive, the ebb and flow, the rocks themselves, obscure Pleiades, each point of which is a whirling pivot, the centre of an irradiation of currents, an indefinable con-

spiracy of the apathy of things against the temerity of a living being; the winter, the clouds, the besieging sea, all surrounded Gilliatt, encircled him slowly, closed themselves, as it were, around him, and separated him from mankind the same as a dungeon built up around a person. Everything was against him, nothing was in his favor; he was isolated, abandoned, weakened, his strength gone, and forgotten. Gilliatt's storehouse was empty, his tools were broken or defective, he was hungry and thirsty by day and cold by night, he was covered with sores and tatters, rags concealed his wounds, he had rents in his clothes and his flesh, his hands were torn, his feet bloody, his limbs attenuated, his face pale, but a flame shone from his eyes.

A wonderful flame,—evident will-power. The eye of man is so formed that his power is seen through it. The pupil of the eye reveals what amount of manhood there is within us. We gain credit by the light which shines from under our eyebrows. People with small consciences wink their eyes; those with large ideas shoot lightning glances. If there is no light under the eyelids, it is because there is no thought in the brain; it is because there is no power of loving in the heart. He who loves, wills, and he who wills has an intelligent and brilliant expression. Resolution

lends fire to the eye—a wonderful fire, composed of the combustion of timid thoughts.

He who perseveres is sublime. He who is only brave has but one impulse; he who is only valiant has but one temperament; he who is only courageous has but one virtue; but he who perseveres in the truth possesses greatness. Almost the whole secret of great hearts lies in this word, *perseverando* (persevere). Perseverance is to courage what the wheel is to the lever; it is the perpetual renewing of the fulcrum. Whether the goal be on earth or in heaven, persevere to the end; everything will be found there; the first example is like that of Columbus, the second like that of Jesus. The cross is but a symbol, hence its glory. Not to allow one's conscience to discuss, nor one's will to be disarmed, is the way to obtain tolerance and triumph. In the order of moral laws, to fall does not preclude rising. After the fall comes the ascension. Commonplace persons allow themselves to be dissuaded by plausible obstacles; not so the strong. They may perish, but are sure to conquer. You can tell Stephen all sorts of good reasons why he should not allow himself to be stoned. The disdain of reasonable objections gives rise to this sublime victory, which, when gained, is called martyrdom.

Every effort Gilliatt made seemed chained to the impossible, the result was unsuccessful or slow, and it was, therefore, necessary to expend much strength in order to accomplish but little; it was this which made him great, it was this which elicited sympathy.

The misfortune of working alone was, that in order to erect four beams above a wrecked vessel, in order to cut out and separate from the remainder of the ship the part which could be saved, in order to adjust to this wreck within the wreck four tackle, with their cables, so many preparations, so much labor, so many attempts, so many nights on the hard rock, so many days of suffering, had been necessary. There seemed a fatality in the cause, a necessity in the result. This wretchedness Gilliatt had more than accepted; he had chosen it. Dreading a competitor, because a competitor might have been a rival, he had sought no help. The crushing enterprise, the risk, the danger, the task multiplied by itself, the possible destruction of the salvor by the very thing he was attempting to rescue, the famine, the fever, the destitution, the distress,—all that he had taken upon himself alone. He had placed that much confidence in himself.

He seemed under a sort of terrible pneumatic bell. His vitality left him by degrees. He scarcely perceived it.

Exhaustion of strength does not exhaust the will. Faith is but a secondary power; will is the first. The proverbial mountains moved by faith are nothing to what the will can accomplish. All the ground which Gilliatt lost in vigor he gained in tenacity. The reducing of the physical man under the repressing action of this wilderness ended in the growth of the moral man.

Gilliatt felt no fatigue, or, to be more exact, would not allow himself to feel it. When the spirit refuses to recognize the weakness of the body it shows immense power.

Gilliatt saw the steps by which his work progressed, and saw that only. He was miserable without being conscious of it. His aim, which was almost within his reach, deluded him. He bore all these sufferings without another thought than this: Forward! His work turned his head. The will-power intoxicates. One's soul can be filled with it. This intoxication is called heroism.

Gilliatt was a sort of Job of the ocean.

But a Job struggling, combating by facing his afflictions, a conquering Job,—and if such words are not too grand for a poor sailor and fisher of crabs and lobsters,—a combination of Job and Prometheus.

V.

SUB UMBRA

(In the Shadow)

Sometimes, during the night, Gilliatt opened his eyes and looked into the darkness.

He felt himself strangely moved.

His eyes opened upon the dark night. A sad situation, full of anxiety.

There is such a thing as the oppression of darkness.

An indescribable roof of darkness; a deep obscurity which no diver can penetrate; light mingled with that obscurity, an indescribable, subdued, and sombre light; pulverized light; is it a seed? is it ashes? millions of torches, but no light; a vast ignition which keeps its own secret, a diffusion of fire in dust which has the appearance of flying sparks stopped in their course; the disorder of the whirlwind with the immobility of the sepulchre, the problem presenting a precipitous opening, the enigma alternately showing and concealing its face, the infinite masked with dark-

ness; such is night. This superposition weighs upon mankind.

This amalgamation of every mystery at once, the mystery of the universe and the mystery of fate, overwhelms the human brain.

The pressure of this gloom produces an opposite effect on different natures. In the presence of night man feels his own incompleteness. He beholds the darkness, and is conscious of his weakness. The black heaven is like a blind man. Man, in the presence of night, bends, kneels, prostrates himself, lies prone upon the earth, crawls toward a refuge, or seeks for wings. He almost always wishes to flee from the shapeless presence of the Unknown. He asks himself what it is; he trembles, he bends forward, he cannot understand it; sometimes, also, he desires to go toward it.

To go whither?

Yonder.

Yonder? What does that mean? and what is there?

This curiosity is evidently about forbidden things, for, on this side, all the bridges surrounding man are broken. There is no arch by means of which he can span the infinite. But the forbidden attracts, as a whirlpool. Where the foot cannot tread, the eye can reach; where the sight cannot penetrate, the

mind can soar. There is no one who does not make the attempt, however feeble and insufficient the effort may be. Man, according to his nature, searches into the night, or stands awe-struck before it. It has the effect of repressing some, while it expands the soul of others. The scene is sombre; the inexplicable is mingled with it.

If the night be clear, it has a background of shadow; if it be stormy, it has a background of smoke. The illimitable at the same time conceals and presents itself; it is closed to research, but open to conjecture. Countless dots of light render the bottomless obscurity still darker. Rubies, scintillations, stars; existences revealed in the unknown universe; frightful challenges to approach and touch these lights, which are the indications of creation in the absolute. They are the marks of distance where distance is immeasurable; they are we cannot tell what real but seemingly impossible system of numbering the low-water mark of the depths. One microscopic glittering point, then another, and another, and still another; they are scarcely perceptible, yet they are enormous. This light is a focus; this focus, a star; this star, a sun; this sun, a universe; this universe, nothing. Every number is zero in the presence of the infinite.

These universes which are nothing, exist. On realizing their existence, one feels the difference between being nothing and non-existence.

The inaccessible added to the inexplicable, such is heaven.

From this contemplation arises a sublime phenomenon—the enlargement of the soul by awe.

Awe is a feeling peculiar to man; the beast does not experience this fear. Intelligence is eclipsed by this august terror, and also finds in it the proof of its existence.

Shadow is a unity; from that fact arises the feeling of awe. At the same time it is complex; hence it inspires terror. Its unity weighs upon one's spirits and takes away the desire for resistance. Its complexity causes one to gaze around on all sides; it seems as if sudden attacks were to be feared. One surrenders and yet is on his guard. One is in the presence of all things, hence follows submission, and in the presence of much, hence follows defiance. The unity of darkness contains a multiple—a mysterious multiple, visible in matter, felt in thought. This constitutes silence, another reason to be on one's guard.

Night (he who writes this has said the same thing elsewhere) is the characteristic and normal condition of the special creation of which

we form a part. Day, brief in duration here as it is in space, is only the proximity of a star.

The universal miracle of night is not accomplished without friction, and all the friction of such a system produces the contusions of life. The friction of the system is what we call evil. We feel the evil in this obscurity, latent contradiction of divine order, virtual blasphemy of the actual, rebelling against the ideal. Evil complicates the entire world with an indescribable thousand-headed monster. Evil is everywhere present for the purpose of protesting. As the hurricane, it disturbs the course of a ship; as chaos, it interferes with the formation of a world. Good is a unity, evil is ubiquitous. Evil disconcerts life, which is rational. It causes the fly to be devoured by the bird, and the planet to be annihilated by the comet. Evil is a blot on creation.

Nocturnal darkness is full of confusion. He who searches into it is submerged by it, and remains there struggling. No fatigue can be compared to the examination of darkness. It is the study of an obliteration.

There is no definite point where the mind can rest. There are points of departure, but no points of arrival. The interlacing of contradictory solutions, all the branches of doubt presenting themselves at the same moment,

the ramifications of phenomena unfolding themselves without limit beneath an infinite pressure, all laws flowing into each other, are an unfathomable medley which causes minerals to produce vegetation, vegetation to produce life, thought to have weight, love to shine, and gravitation to attract; what an immense front to attack, composed of all the questions which develop in the boundless darkness! from things half perceived we roughly sketch the unknown. The cosmic unity in full view, not of the eye but of the mind, in the vast limitless space; the invisible becoming visible. Such is shadow. Man is under it.

He cannot define it, but still he carries, in proportion to the capacity of his mind, the monstrous weight of the whole. This obsession turned the attention of the Chaldean shepherds to astronomy. Involuntary revelations ooze from the pores of creation; an exudation of science takes place of itself in some way and wins over the ignorant. Under this mysterious influence every recluse unconsciously becomes a natural philosopher.

Obscurity is indivisible. It is inhabited. Inhabited, without being disturbed by the absolute; inhabited, also, subject to being disturbed. There is movement within, which is alarming. The phases of a sacred formation are accomplished here. Premeditation,

powers, desired destinations, labor together in an enormous work; a terrible and horrible life lies within it. There are vast evolutions of stars—the stellar family, the planetary family, the zodiacal pollen, the *quid divinum* of currents, effluvia, polarization, and attraction; there are both attraction and repulsion, a magnificent ebb and flow of universal antitheses, the imponderable set at liberty in the midst of the elements; there is sap in the spheres, a light surrounding them, the wandering atom, the scattered germ, the waves of fecundation, the unprecedented confusion of the meeting of what is united and what is antagonistic, distances as vague as dreams, dizzy motions, the plunging of worlds into the incalculable, wonders pursuing each other in the darkness, one mechanism the same for all, the breath of fleeing spheres, wheels which are felt to be turning. The learned man conjectures about this, the ignorant man consents and trembles; yet all this exists, and conceals itself; it is impregnable, it is beyond the reach of man, it cannot be approached. Man is convinced of it by the sense of oppression which he feels. He bears upon himself an indescribable, dark testimony of that fact. He cannot grasp anything. He is crushed by the impalpable.

He is everywhere surrounded by the incomprehensible, nowhere by the intelligible.

And to this add the formidable question, Is this immanence a being?

We are beneath the shadow. We look, we listen.

Meanwhile, the dark earth advances and revolves; the flowers are cognizant of this enormous motion; the catch-fly opens at eleven o'clock at night and the day-lily at five o'clock in the morning. Curious regularity.

In other depths, the drop of water becomes a world, infusoria swarm, animalculæ are wonderfully prolific, the imperceptible displays its grandeur, the inverse side of immensity is exposed to view; one diatom produces thirteen millions of diatoms in one hour.

What a propounding of all enigmas at once!

They are irreducible.

One is compelled to believe. A forced belief is the result. Faith alone does not produce tranquility of mind. Faith feels an inexpressibly singular need of form. Hence the origin of religions. Nothing is so overwhelming as an undefined belief.

Whatever one may think and whatever one may wish, whatever power of resistance one may have, it is impossible to look into darkness without contemplating.

What can be done with these phenomena? How can one move under their convergence? It is impossible to analyze this pressure. What reverie can conduce to the harmonizing of all these mysterious facts? What abstruse, simultaneous, stammering revelations, rendered obscure by their very mass, a sort of lisping of the word! Darkness is silence; but this silence tells everything. One resultant majestically springs forth—God. God is the incomprehensible idea. This idea exists in man. Syllogisms, quarrels, negatious dogmas, and religions pass over it without diminishing it. This idea is fully affirmed by the darkness. But everything else is disturbed. Formidable Immanence. The inexpressible union of forces is shown by the maintenance of all this obscurity in equilibrium. The universe is suspended, and nothing falls. Incessant and tremendous displacement occurs without accident and without fracture. Man participates in this movement of translation, and the amount of oscillation which he sustains he calls destiny. Where does destiny commence? Where does nature end? What is the difference between an event and a season, between a grief and a rain, between a virtue and a star? Is not an hour a wave? The systems of the universe continue without being accountable to man for their impassi-

ble revolutions. The starry heaven is a vision of wheels, balances, and weights. Such is supreme contemplation, reinforced by supreme meditation. Such is the whole of reality plus the whole of abstraction. There is nothing beyond. One feels one's self grasped. One is at the mercy of that darkness. No escape is possible. One finds one's self a part of the mechanism, an integral part of the Unknown Whole; one feels the unknown within one mysteriously fraternizing with the unknown which lies beyond.

Such is the sublime announcement of death. What anguish and at the same time what rapture! To cling to the infinite, to be led by this adherence to attribute to one's self a necessary immortality—who knows? a possible eternity, to feel in the great surge of the deluge of universal life the irrepressible presence of the ego! to gaze at the stars and say, "I am a soul like you!" to gaze at the darkness and say, "I am an abyss like you!"

These enormities constitute night.

All this, intensified by solitude, weighed upon Gilliatt.

Did he understand it? No.

Did he feel it? Yes.

Gilliatt was a combination of a large but disturbed mind, and of a large but untutored heart.

VI.

GILLIATT PLACES THE SLOOP IN POSITION

The rescue of the engine planned by Gilliatt was, as we have already said, a veritable escape, and the trials incident to an escape are well known. So, also, are the labors involved. Labors which are almost miraculous ; patience which amounts to agony. A prisoner—Thomas, for example, at Mont-Saint-Michel—found the means of secreting half a wall in his mattress. Another, at Tulle, in 1820, cut lead from the platform of the prison walk—with what knife? no one can guess; melted this lead—with what fire? no one can tell; ran this melted lead—in what mould? that is known, into a mould made of bread-crumbs; with this lead and this mould he made a key, and by means of this key he opened a lock of which he had only seen the keyhole. Gilliatt possessed this marvelous ingenuity. He would have been able to have ascended and descended the cliff of "Boisrosé." He was the Trenck of the wreck and the Latude of an engine.

The sea was the jailer, watching him.

Furthermore, let us say, however unpleasant and injurious the rain may have been, he had contrived to turn it to his advantage. He had, to some extent, replenished his supply of fresh water, but his thirst was unquenchable, and he emptied his can almost as fast as he filled it.

One day,—the last day of April, I think, or the first of May,—everything was ready.

The floor of the engine was, as it were, framed between the eight cables which were suspended from the tackle-blocks, four on one side and four on the other. The sixteen openings through which these cables passed were connected on the deck and beneath the hull by sawed grooves. The planking had been sawed, the timber cut with the hatchet, the ironwork with the file, the sheathing with the chisel. The part of the hull on which the engine rested was cut in the form of a square, and was ready to descend with the engine, while still supporting it. The whole of this frightful, swaying mass was held merely by one chain, which, in its turn, depended only upon a single stroke of the file to sever it. At this point, when the undertaking was so nearly accomplished, haste was prudence.

The tide was low, the moment favorable.

Gilliatt had succeeded in removing the axle

of the paddle-wheels, the extremities of which might have been an obstacle, checking the descent. He had succeeded in fastening this heavy piece vertically within the engine-room itself.

It was time to bring his work to an end. Gilliatt, as we have just remarked, did not feel fatigued, because he would not acknowledge it; but his tools were worn out. The forge was by degrees becoming useless. The stone anvil was split. The bellows had begun to work badly. The little hydraulic fall being of sea-water, saline deposits had encrusted the joints of the apparatus, and interfered with its action.

Gilliatt went to l'Homme creek, examined the sloop, assured himself that everything was in good condition, particularly the four rings placed to starboard and larboard, then raised the anchor, and rowed the boat back to the Douvres.

The passage between the Douvres was large enough to admit the sloop. There was depth enough, and also a sufficiently wide opening. From the very first day Gilliatt saw that it would be possible to push the sloop in until it would lie under the Durande.

This feat, however, was difficult; it required the precision of the jeweler; and the insertion of the sloop into the passage in the

rock was all the more intricate because, for Gilliatt's purpose, it was necessary to force it in by the stern, rudder first. It was important that the mast and also the rigging of the sloop should project beyond the wreck, on the side facing the entrance to the inlet.

The difficulties in handling rendered the operation far from easy, even for Gilliatt himself. It was not like entering l'Homme creek, which was accomplished by a skilful turn of the tiller; he must push, drag, row, and take soundings all at once.

Gilliatt spent no less than a quarter of an hour in doing this; however, he was successful in this undertaking.

In fifteen or twenty minutes the sloop was adjusted beneath the Durande. It was almost wedged there. Gilliatt, by means of his two anchors, moored the sloop head and stern. The larger one of the two was placed so as to resist the strongest wind to be feared, which was the west wind. Then, by the aid of a lever and the capstan, Gilliatt lowered into the sloop the two boxes containing the pieces of the paddle-wheels, the slings of which were all ready. These two boxes furnished the ballast.

Having disposed of these two boxes, Gilliatt fastened to the hook belonging to the chain

of the capstan the slings of the regulating tackle intended to regulate the pulleys.

For Gilliatt's purpose the defects of the sloop were its merits. It had no deck, making more depth for the cargo, which could rest upon the hold. Her mast was well forward—too far forward, perhaps; its contents would, therefore, have more room, and the mast, being thus beyond the wreck, nothing would retard the exit of the sloop. It was shaped like a wooden shoe, and there is nothing so reliable and firm on the sea as a wooden shoe.

Suddenly Gilliatt perceived that the sea was rising. He looked, to ascertain from what quarter the wind was coming.

VII.

SUDDEN DANGER

There was little breeze, but what there was blew from the west—a bad habit in which the wind frequently indulges during the equinox.

The rising tide varies much in its effect upon the Douvres rocks, according to the quarter from which the wind blows. The sea enters the passage according to the gale which impels it, either from the east or from the west. If the sea enters from the east, it is pleasant and mild; if from the west, it is tempestuous. The reason of this is, because the east wind, blowing from the land, has but little force, while the west wind, crossing the Atlantic, brings with it all the gales of that vast expanse. Even a very slight breeze blowing from the west causes anxiety. It rolls the large billows from the limitless expanse, and forces too much water at once into the narrow passage.

The rushing of water is always terrible. It

is the same with water as with a crowd, a multitude is like a liquid: when the proportion able to enter is less than the number wishing to enter, there is a rush among the crowd, the same as there is a convulsion in the water. As long as the west wind blows, however slight the breeze, the Douvres are subjected to this assault twice a day. The tide rises, the sea presses in, the rock resists. The entrance being very narrow, the waves, which are forcibly thrust in, rebound and roar, and a tremendous swell beats against the two inner sides of the defile. Thus the Douvres, during the slightest wind from the west, present the singular spectacle of a sea calm without, while a storm is raging within the rocks. This local and restricted tumult has none of the characteristics of a tempest; it is only an uproar of the waves; nevertheless, it is terrible. As for the north and south winds, they blow across the rock, and make but little surf in the defile. The entrance on the east, a fact necessary to remember, is near l'Homme rock; the dangerous opening facing the west is on the opposite extremity, exactly between the two Douvres.

It was at this western opening that Gilliatt now found himself with the wrecked Durande and the sloop moored beneath it.

A catastrophe seemed inevitable. There

was only a moderate breeze, but it was sufficient to produce this imminent catastrophe.

In a few hours, the swell of the rising tide would rush in full force through the Douvres passage. Already the first billows resounded. This swell, the rush of the entire Atlantic, would gather force from the whole ocean. There would be no squall, no violence, but only an overwhelming wave containing within it the propelling force which it had gathered all the way from America to Europe, a bound of two thousand miles. This wave, a gigantic wall of water, would meet the opening in the rocks, and, caught between the two Douvres, the entrance towers, the pillars of the passage, swollen by the tide, augmented by resistance, repelled by the rock, and urged on by the wind, would strike the rock violently, and with every contortion arising from the resistance it had encountered, and with all the frenzy of the impeded wave, would rush between the rocky walls, where it would reach the Durande and the sloop and would crush them.

A defense was needed against this contingency. Gilliatt had one.

The tide must be prevented from entering the defile at one bound; it must be prevented from striking, yet allowed to rise; its passage must be barred without preventing its entrance; it must be resisted and also admitted;

the compression of the water in the passage, wherein lay all the danger, must be averted; the water, instead of rushing in, must be made to flow in quietly; the violence and brutality must be abstracted from the wave; its fury must be turned to gentleness. The resistance which appears must be substituted for the resistance which irritates.

Gilliatt, with the skill which he possessed, which was stronger than strength, climbed the rocks like a chamois among the mountains or a monkey in the forest, utilizing in his tottering and dizzy strides the slightest projections in the rocks, leaping into the water and emerging again, swimming in the eddy, climbing the rocks, holding a rope between his teeth and a hammer in his hand. Thus he detached the small cable which held suspended the section of the forward part of the Durande, which was pressed against the base of the Little Douvre, made out of some ends of hawser a contrivance which served the purpose of hinges, fastened this section to the large nails fixed in the granite, made this bulwark of planks swing on these hinges like the gate of a sluice—that is, to one side, as one would a rudder—sidewise to the waves, which pushed one end of it against the Great Douvre, while the rope hinges held the other end against the Little Douvre. Next he contrived, by means of the large nails

placed there beforehand, to fix the same kind of fastening on the Great Douvre as upon the little one, and firmly attached this vast mass of wood to the two pillars of the defile, crossed this barricade with a chain, like a belt upon a breast-plate, and in less than an hour this barrier resisted the tide, and the passage in the rock was closed as by a door.

This powerful construction, a heavy mass of beams and planks, which, if laid flat, would have constituted a raft, stood upright and formed a wall, which Gilliatt, assisted by the water, had handled with the dexterity of a juggler. It might almost have been said that the sleight-of-hand had been performed before the rising sea had had time to perceive it.

It was one of those occasions on which Jean Bart would have uttered that famous expression which he addressed to the sea every time he escaped shipwreck: "*Attrapé, l'Anglais!*" (Caught, Englishman!) for it is well known that when Jean Bart wished to insult the ocean, he called it *l'Anglais* (the Englishman).

Having barred the entrance to the defile, Gilliatt turned his attention to the sloop. He let out sufficient rope on the two anchors to enable her to rise with the tide, an operation similar to what the sailors of old used to call "*mouillier avec des embossures*" (anchoring with springs). In all this Gilliatt had not

been taken by surprise; the emergency had been foreseen; a seaman would have known this by the two pulleys of the top-ropes, which were lashed by the means of clamps to the stern of the sloop, through which passed two cables, the ends of which served as bolt-ropes to the rings of the two anchors.

Meanwhile the tide was rising; it was now half-tide; it is at this time that the movements of the waves, due to the tide, are often rough, even in calm weather. Exactly what Gilliatt expected came to pass. The waters rolled violently toward the barrier, struck it, surged against it, and passed under. Outside was the heavy swell; within, the water percolated quietly. Gilliatt had invented a sort of marine Caudine Forks. The tide was conquered.

VIII.

UNFORESEEN HINDRANCES DELAY THE ISSUE

The dreaded moment had come.

The problem now was to place the engine in the sloop.

Gilliatt remained thoughtful for several moments, holding the elbow of his left arm in his right hand and his forehead in his left hand. Then he climbed upon the wreck, of which a part, the engine, was to be removed, while the other portion, the hull, was to remain.

He severed the four slings which held the four chains of the smoke-stack to the starboard and port sides of the Durande. As the slings were merely of rope, his knife served his purpose. The four chains, set free, hung down the length of the smoke-stack.

From the wreck he climbed up to the apparatus which he had constructed, struck the beams with his foot, inspected the tackle-blocks, looked at the pulleys, felt the ropes, examined the pieces by which they were lengthened, assured himself that the untarred rope was not saturated with water, found that

nothing was wanting, and that nothing was giving way, then springing from the top of the suspended beams to the deck, he took his position near the capstan, in that part of the Durande which he had planned to leave fast in the Douvres. That was his post during his labors.

Earnest, swayed only by useful impulses, he cast a final glance at the tackle-blocks, then seized a file and began to saw the chain which suspended the whole.

The rasping sound of the file could be heard amid the roaring of the sea.

The chain of the capstan, attached to the regulating burton, was within Gilliatt's reach, quite near his hand.

Suddenly there was a crash. The chain which he was filing had snapped when a little more than half cut; the whole apparatus began to waver. Gilliatt had barely time to seize the burton-tackle.

The broken chain struck the rock, the eight cables strained, the huge mass, sawed and cut through, detached itself from the wreck, the interior of the Durande opened, the iron flooring of the engine, weighing on the cables, was visible below the keel. If Gilliatt had not seized the burton-tackle at that moment it would have fallen. But his powerful hand was there, and it descended slowly.

When the brother of Jean Bart—Peter

Bart, that powerful and sagacious drunkard, that poor Dunkirk fisherman who addressed the grand-admiral of France familiarly as "thou"—rescued the sinking galley *Langeron*, in the bay of Ambleteuse, when, in order to rescue that heavy floating mass from the midst of the breakers of that tempestuous bay, he rolled up the mainsail and tied it with sea-rushes, when he wished them to be like reeds and break of their own accord, spreading the sail to the wind, he trusted to the breaking of the rushes, as Gilliatt did to the snapping of the chain; and the same eccentric feat of genius was crowned by the same success.

The burton-tackle seized by Gilliatt held firm and worked admirably. Its function, it must be remembered, was the controlling of many forces by uniting them into one and by reducing them to simultaneous action. This burton somewhat resembled the bridle of a bow-line, except that, instead of trimming a sail, it balanced an engine.

Gilliatt, standing there holding the capstan, had, so to speak, his hand on the pulse of the apparatus. It was here that his inventive genius manifested itself.

A remarkable coincidence of forces was produced.

While the engine of the Durande, detached in a mass, was descending toward the sloop,

the sloop was rising toward the engine. The wreck and the rescuing boat assisted each other in opposite ways; by approaching one another they spared themselves half the toil.

The tide, swelling noiselessly between the two Douvres, raised the boat and brought it nearer the Durande. The sea was more than conquered, it was turned to good account. The ocean became a part of the mechanism.

The rising tide raised the sloop without a shock, gently, almost cautiously, as though it had been made of porcelain.

Gilliatt combined and proportioned the two forces, that of the water and that of the apparatus, and, standing motionless at the capstan, like some formidable statue, instantly obeyed by all things capable of movement, regulated the slowness of the descent by the slowness of the rising tide.

There was no concussion of the waves, no jerking of the tackle. It was a strange collaboration of all natural forces, under control. On one side, gravitation bearing the engine; on the other, the tide raising the sloop. The attraction of the heavenly bodies, which causes the tide, and the attraction of the earth, which is called weight, seemed to extend their aid to Gilliatt. Their subordination knew no hesitation or halt, and, under the dominance of one mind, these passive

powers became active auxiliaries. From moment to moment the work progressed; the interval between the sloop and the wreck insensibly diminished. They approached each other in silence, and in a sort of fear of the man who stood above them. The elements had received an order which they were obeying.

Almost at the precise moment when the tide ceased to rise, the cables ceased to slide. Suddenly, but without disturbance, the pulleys stopped. The engine had taken its place in the sloop, as well as though placed there by hand. There it stood, straight, motionless, and solid. The iron floor of the engine, with its four angles, rested firmly on the hold.

The undertaking was accomplished.

Gilliatt gazed in bewilderment. The poor creature was not unduly elated by his happiness. He was overpowered by this great joy. He felt his limbs give way, and in the presence of his triumph he, who until that moment had not been agitated, began to tremble.

He gazed at the sloop under the wreck and then at the engine in the sloop. He could scarcely believe it. It might have been supposed that he had never expected to do what he had accomplished. A miracle had been wrought by his hands, and he contemplated it in amazement.

This amazement lasted but a short time.

Gilliatt started like a man who is just awaking; he seized a saw, cut the eight ropes, then, thanks to the rising of the tide, he was separated from the sloop by only about ten feet, so he jumped into it, took a roll of cordage, made four slings, passed them through the rings prepared in advance, and fastened on the two sides of the edge of the sloop the four chains of the smoke-stack, which an hour before had been attached to the edge of the Durande.

The smoke-stack being secured, Gilliatt unfastened the upper part of the engine. A square piece of the flooring of the deck of the Durande adhered to it. Gilliatt unnailed it and loosened the sloop from these encumbrances of planks and beams, which he flung upon the rocks. A great relief.

However, the sloop, as might have been foreseen, had borne herself well under the weight of the engine. She had sunk no farther in the water than the load-water line. The engine of the Durande, although heavy, was less so than the load of stones and the cannon formerly brought back from Herm by the sloop.

All was then finished. There was nothing to do but to depart.

IX.

SUCCESS WITHDRAWN AS SOON AS GRANTED

All was not finished.

Nothing was more clearly indicated than the necessity of reopening the defile closed by the pieces of planks from the Durande, and of immediately pushing the sloop away from the rock. At sea every moment is important. There was little wind, scarcely a wrinkle on the open sea; the beautiful evening gave promise of a fine night. The sea was calm, but the ebb-tide was beginning to be felt; the time was now favorable for departing. The ebb-tide would assist him in leaving the Douvres, and the flood would aid him on his way to Guernsey. Saint Sampson might be reached by daylight.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself. One thing escaped Gilliatt's foresight.

The engine was free, but not the smoke-stack.

The tide, in bringing the sloop near to the wreck, which was suspended in the air, had diminished the dangers of the descent and shortened the process of the rescue; but this

diminution of the interval had left the top of the smoke-stack entangled in a kind of a gaping frame formed by the open hull of the Durande. The smoke-stack was held fast there as between four walls.

The service rendered by the sea had been accompanied by this unfortunate drawback. It seemed as though the waves, constrained to obey, had taken revenge.

It is true that what the flood-tide had done the ebb-tide would undo.

The smoke-stack, which was a little over eighteen feet in height, penetrated about eight feet in the Durande; the water-level would fall about twelve feet; the smoke-stack, descending with the boat on the ebb-tide, would have four feet to spare and could get through.

But how long would it be before it would be free? Six hours.

In six hours it would be nearly midnight. What means would there be of setting out at that hour? What channel could be found among all these breakers, which were, even in daylight, so inextricable. How could he risk his vessel in the depth of the dark night amid this ambuscade of shoals.

There was nothing to be done but to wait until the next day. These six hours lost entailed a loss of at least twelve.

He could not think of advancing his work by reopening the entrance to the passage. The barrier would be necessary at the next tide.

Gilliatt was obliged to rest.

Folding his arms was the only thing which he had not done since his arrival on the Douvres rock.

This forced repose irritated him, and he felt almost indignant, as though it were his own fault.

He said to himself: What would Déruchette think of me, if she were to see me here doing nothing?

However, this interval in which to recuperate his strength was perhaps not useless.

The sloop was now at his command, and he decided to pass the night in it.

He ascended the Great Douvre to look for his sheepskin, descended, supped on some limpets and two or three sea-chestnuts, and, being very thirsty, he drank the last draughts of fresh water from his can, which was nearly empty, enveloped himself in the skin, the wool of which felt comfortable to him, lay down like a watch-dog near the engine, lowered his red cap over his head, and went to sleep.

He slept heavily. Man sleeps well after great achievements.

X.

THE WARNINGS OF THE SEA

In the middle of the night he awoke suddenly, as though jerked by a spring.

He opened his eyes.

The Douvres above his head were illuminated as by a white glow, like a great mass of burning embers.

A reflection resembling that of a fire shone on the dark surface of the rock.

Whence came this fire?

From the water.

The appearance of the sea was unusual.

It seemed as though the water was on fire. As far as the eye could reach, among the rocks and beyond them the whole sea was ablaze. This blaze was not red; it did not in the least resemble the great living flame of craters and furnaces. There was no sparkling, no glare, no purple hue, no noise. Bluish streaks on the water reminded one of the folds of a shroud. A great pale blue light shimmered on the sea. It was not a fire, though it had the appearance of one.

It somewhat resembled the livid light of a dreamy flame within a sepulchre.

Imagine the darkness illuminated.

Night, the vast and dark expanse of night, seemed to be the fuel of that icy fire. It was an indescribable light emanating from darkness. The gloom entered as an element in that phantom light.

The sailors of La Manche were well acquainted with these indescribable phosphorescent effects, which are full of warning for the navigator. They are nowhere more surprising than in the great V near Isigny. In this light, objects lose their reality. A spectral glimmer gives them a transparent appearance. The rocks seem to be mere outlines. The cables of the anchors appear like bars of iron heated to white heat. The fishermen's nets under water seem to be knitted fire. One half of an oar has the appearance of ebony, while the other half under the water appears like silver. The drops of water as they fall from the oar stud the sea with stars. Every boat trails a comet behind it. The sailors, wet and shiny, seem like men on fire. One plunges one's hand into the water, and withdraws it gloved in flame; this flame is dead; it does not burn. The arm becomes a lighted torch. The shapes of things are seen in the sea rolling beneath the wave, as in liquid fire.

The fish appear like tongues of fire or fragments of forked lightning moving in the pale depths.

This light had penetrated Gilliatt's closed eyelids, and awakened him.

His awaking was opportune. The high-tide had fallen and the waters were beginning to rise again. The smoke-stack of the engine had become disengaged during Gilliatt's sleep and was about to enter again into the yawning wreck above it. It was rising slowly. A foot more and it would re-enter the Durande.

It would take about half an hour for the tide to rise a foot. If Gilliatt wished to profit by this deliverance, which had now become possible, he had half an hour before him.

He leaped to his feet.

Urgent as the situation was, he could not help standing for a few minutes, and thoughtfully gazing at the phosphorescence.

Gilliatt was thoroughly familiar with the sea in all its phases. Notwithstanding the mischief it had done, and although often ill-treated by it, he had for a long time been its companion. This mysterious being called the ocean, could have no thoughts that Gilliatt was not able to divine. By observation, meditation, and solitude he had become a weather-prophet, what is called in England "weather wise."

Gilliatt hastened to the top-ropes and paid out more cable; then, the sloop being no longer held fast by the anchors, he seized the boat-hook, and, leaning against the rock, pushed it toward the entrance, some feet beyond the Durande, quite near to the barrier. Here, as the fishermen of Guernsey say, it had *du rang* (full range). In less than ten minutes the sloop had been withdrawn from beneath the stranded wreck. There was no further danger of the smoke-stack being again caught in the trap. The tide was now at liberty to rise.

But Gilliatt had not the appearance of a man about to take his departure.

He continued to contemplate the phosphorescence, and raised the anchors; but he had no intention of starting; he did this in order to moor the sloop anew, more firmly—near the entrance, it is true.

Until now he had only used the two anchors of the sloop, and had not yet used the little anchor of the Durande, which he had found, it will be remembered, among the breakers. He had deposited this anchor, in case of an emergency, in a corner of the sloop with a quantity of hawsers and top-rope pulleys, and furnished its cable beforehand with very large knots to prevent its dragging. Gilliatt let go this third anchor, taking care

to attach a cable to a small rope, one end of which was slung through the rung of the anchor and the other end fastened to the windlass of the sloop. In this manner he made a sort of triangular anchorage, much stronger than mooring with two anchors. This indicated great anxiety and a doubling of precautions. A sailor would have recognized in this operation a similarity to the anchorage used in stormy weather, when a current is to be feared which might carry the vessel to leeward.

The phosphorescence which Gilliatt watched and on which he kept his eye fixed, was threatening, perhaps, but at the same time it aided him. Had it not been for it he would have still been asleep, and would have become the dupe of night. It had awakened him and was giving him light.

It shed an equivocal light on the rocks. But this light, alarming as it appeared to be to Gilliatt, was useful, inasmuch as it rendered the danger visible to him, and made it possible for him to contend with it. Henceforth, whenever he should desire to set sail, the sloop carrying the engine would be free.

And yet Gilliatt was thinking less and less of leaving. The sloop being secured, he went in search of the stoutest chain in his storehouse, and attached it to the nails fastened in

the two Douvres; with this chain he strengthened from within the rampart of planks and beams already protected on the outside by the other cross-chain. Instead of opening the entrance, he barricaded it more completely.

The phosphorescence still lighted him, but it was diminishing. The day, however, was beginning to dawn.

All at once Gilliatt listened attentively.

XI.

SUCCESS TO THE GOOD LISTENER

It seemed to him that he heard a feeble and indistinct sound coming from a great distance. At certain times the deep sends forth a murmuring sound. He listened a second time. The distant noise recommenced. Gilliatt shook his head like one who recognizes a familiar sound.

A few minutes later he was at the other extremity of the defile of the rock, at the eastern entrance, which had remained open until then, and with heavy strokes of the hammer was driving large nails into the granite of the two sides of the defile near to l'Homme rock, the same as he had done at the defile of the Douvres.

All the crevices of these rocks had been prepared and well furnished with wood, almost all of which was from the heart of the oak. As the rock on this side was much worn away, there were abundant cracks, and Gilliatt was able to fasten more nails here than in the base of the two Douvres.

Suddenly, the phosphorescence was extinguished, as though it had been blown out, and was replaced by the morning light, which grew brighter every instant.

After having driven in the nails, Gilliatt dragged the beams, then the ropes, and afterwards the chains, and, without turning his eyes away from his work, without relaxing his attention for a moment, began to construct, across the entrance to l'Homme inlet, one of those open-work barriers which science has now adopted and calls breakwaters ; this he did by placing planks horizontally and binding them together by cables.

Those who have seen, for instance, at Rocquaine, in Guernsey, or at Bourg-d'Eau, in France, the effect produced by a few piles driven in the rock, can understand the power of these simple contrivances. Breakwaters are a combination of what is called in France, *èpi*, with what is called in England, dike. They are the *cheveaux-de-frise* of fortifications against tempests. One can contend with the sea only by taking advantage of the principle of dividing its force.

Meanwhile, the sun had risen and was shining brightly. The sky was clear, the sea, calm.

Gilliatt hastened his work. He, too, was calm, but there was anxiety in his haste. He

passed with huge strides from rock to rock, from the barrier to the storehouse, and from the storehouse to the barrier. He returned, dragging, with all his might, at one time a rider, at another a binding-streak. The utility of this provision of timber was apparent. It was evident that Gilliatt was face to face with an emergency which he had foreseen. A strong bar of iron served him as a lever for moving beams.

The work progressed so rapidly that it appeared to grow rather than to be constructed. One who has not seen a military pontonier at work can form no idea of this rapidity.

The eastern entrance was still narrower than that on the west. The gap was only five or six feet wide. The narrowness of this opening was of great assistance to Gilliatt. The place to be fortified and closed was very restricted; the barrier could, therefore, be more solidly and simply constructed. Hence horizontal beams sufficed; upright pieces were useless.

The first cross-beams of the breakwater being laid, Gilliatt climbed upon them and listened.

The roaring had become significant.

Gilliatt continued to work at his breakwater. He buttressed it with two cat-heads of the Durande, fastened to the framework of beams by halliards passed through their three pulley-sheaves, and bound the whole with

chains. This construction was nothing else than a kind of colossal hurdle, having beams for rods, and chains in the place of wattles. It seemed to be woven together rather than built.

Gilliatt multiplied the fastenings, and added nails where they were necessary.

Having obtained a great quantity of round iron from the wreck, he had been able to make a great number of huge nails.

As he worked he crunched biscuit between his teeth. He was thirsty, but he could not drink, as he had no more fresh water, for he had emptied his can at supper on the previous evening.

He dragged up four or five more beams, then mounted the barrier again and listened.

The noise from the horizon had ceased.

All was still.

The sea was calm and superb; it deserved all the madrigals which worthy citizens address to it when they feel satisfied with it: "a mirror," "a pond," "like oil," "playful," "like a lamb." The deep blue of the sky responded to the deep green of the ocean. The sapphire and the emerald could admire each other. They had no occasion to reproach each other. There was no cloud on high, no foam beneath. In the midst of all this splendor the April sun was rising magnificently. It was impossible to have finer weather.

On the verge of the horizon, birds of passage formed a long line against the sky. They were flying rapidly, and were directing their course landward. It seemed as though, in their flight, they were fleeing from some danger.

Gilliatt set to work again to raise the breakwater still higher. He raised it as high as he could—that is, as high as the formation of the rock would permit.

Toward noon the sun seemed to give forth more heat than usual. Noon is the critical time of the day. Gilliatt, standing on the powerful framework which he had just finished building, stopped again to survey the vast expanse.

The sea was more than quiet, there was a dead calm. Not a sail could be seen. The sky was everywhere clear, but from blue it had changed to white. This white hue was peculiar. Upon the western horizon there was a little spot of a sickly appearance. This spot remained in the same place, but increased in size. Near the breakwater the waves rippled very gently.

Gilliatt had done well to build his breakwater.

A tempest was approaching.

The deep had decided to give battle.

BOOK THREE

THE STRUGGLE

I.

EXTREMES MEET

Nothing is more threatening than a late equinoctial storm.

The appearance of the sea presents a strange phenomenon, resulting from what may be called the arrival of the winds from the open sea.

At all seasons, particularly at the time of the Syzygies, at the moment when it is least to be expected, the sea suddenly becomes strangely tranquil. That vast perpetual movement is allayed, it becomes sluggish, it moves languidly as though about to take a rest, and gives one the impression that it is fatigued. Every rag of bunting, from the flag of the fishing-smack to the flag of the man-of-war, droops by the mast. The admiral's flag, the royal and imperial ensigns, all are asleep.

Suddenly, these streamers begin to flutter gently.

If there are clouds, this is the moment to

watch the formation of the cirri; if the sun is setting, for observing the glow of the evening; if it should happen to be night, and the moon shining, to study halos.

It is then that the captain or first officer of the squadron who has the good fortune to possess one of those storm-indicators, the inventor of which is unknown, observes this instrument minutely and takes precautions against the south wind, if the mixture has the appearance of melted sugar; and against the north wind, if it exfoliates in crystallizations, like thickets of brambles or groves of fir-trees. It is then that the poor Irish or Breton fisherman, after having consulted with some mysterious gnomon engraved by the Romans, or by the demons, upon one of those straight enigmatical stones which are called in Brittany, *menhir*, and in Ireland, *cruach*, hauls his boat up on the shore.

Meanwhile the serenity of the sky and sea continues. The day dawns brightly, and Aurora smiles. It was this which filled the ancient soothsayers with religious awe, horrified that anyone could believe in the falsity of the sun. *Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?* (Who shall dare to call the sun false?)

The sombre vision of latent possibilities is hidden from man by the fatal opacity surrounding him. Its most dreadful and per-

fidious aspect is that which masks the convulsions of the deep.

Instead of saying, "a snake in the grass," one ought to say, "a tempest under a calm."

Many hours, sometimes several days, pass thus. Pilots point their glasses here and there. The faces of old sailors wear an expression of severity which is due to the vexation of eternally watching for something.

Suddenly, a confused murmur is heard. A sort of mysterious dialogue is taking place in the air.

Nothing unusual can be seen.

The vast expanse remains motionless.

Still the noise increases, becomes more extended, and raises its voice. The dialogue becomes more emphatic.

There is something behind the horizon.

Something terrible. It is the wind.

The wind, or rather, let us say, the populace of Titans which we call gales.

The numberless unseen multitude.

In India they were called Marouts; in Judea, the Cherubim; in Greece, the Aquilons. These are the invisible winged creatures of the vast expanse. These winds rush onward.

II.

THE WINDS OF THE OPEN SEA

Whence do they come? From the immeasurable expanse. For the spreading of their wings they require the span of the diameter of the abyss. Their huge pinions need the unlimited range of solitary places. The Atlantic, the Pacific, these vast blue expanses are their delight. They darken them. They fly there in troops. Commander Page once saw seven simultaneous waterspouts in the open sea. They are terrible things. They forebode disasters. They cause both the temporary and everlasting swelling of the waves. The extent of their power, the limit of their will, cannot be conjectured. They are the sphinxes of the abyss, and Gama is their Œdipus. In the obscurity of the ever-moving expanse they appear in the form of clouds. He who perceives their livid lineaments on that indefinite outline, the horizon of the sea, feels himself in the presence of an irreducible force. It might be said that human

intelligence disquiets them, and that they revolt against it. Intelligence is invincible, but this element is unconquerable. What can be done to subdue this unassailable, omnipresent element? The wind blows with the force of a club, and then becomes a gentle breeze. Winds attack by crushing everything in their path, and defend themselves by dying away. He who encounters them must resort to expedients. Their varied and repelling assault is disconcerting. They flee as readily as they attack. One cannot lay hold of them. How can they be subdued? The prow of the ship *Argo*, carved from a Dodona rock, which served at the same time for prow and pilot, spoke to them, and they insulted this pilot goddess. When Christopher Columbus saw them approaching the *Pinta* he mounted on deck and addressed to them the first verses of the gospel according to Saint John. Surcouf insulted them. "*Voici la clique*" (Here comes the gang), he said. Napier fired cannon at them. They control chaos.

They possess chaos. What do they do with it? One cannot tell what implacable course they adopt. The cave of the winds is more dreadful than the den of lions. How many corpses are there beneath these bottomless depths! The winds mercilessly upheave this great dark and bitter mass. They always

make themselves heard, but as for them, they heed nothing. They commit deeds which resemble crimes. No one can tell upon whom they will throw their blasts, white with foam. What an impious fury there is in the shipwreck! What an insult to Providence! At times they seem to be spitting at God. They are the tyrants of unknown regions. "*Luoghi spaventosi*" (regions of terror), murmured the Venetian mariners.

Shuddering space is subject to their violence. It is impossible to tell what takes place in these deserted regions. Some horseman seems to be galloping through the gloom. The air sounds like the murmuring of wind in the forest. Nothing can be seen, but the tramping of cavalry is heard. The noonday is suddenly changed into night; a tornado passes; the night is immediately illuminated; the polar lights appear in the heavens. Whirlwinds pass in opposite directions, in a sort of hideous dance, a beating of flails upon the water. A cloud becomes too heavy, parts in the centre, and falls piecemeal into the sea. Other clouds, full of purple light, send forth thunder and lightning, and then become ominously dark; the cloud is emptied of its thunder and becomes black; it is but an extinct ember. Pent-up rain bursts forth in mist. Yonder, where the rain is falling, it

appears like a fiery furnace; in another place it seems like a wave from which torchlights flash. The white gleam of the ocean during the shower throws light to great distances; in the dissolving density strange shapes are seen. Monstrous whirlwinds pierce the clouds. The vapors whirl, the waves spin around, intoxicated Naiads roll about; as far as can be seen, the massive and flaccid ocean merely pulses up and down with no other motion; everything is livid; despairing cries emanate from this pallor.

At the bottom of this inaccessible obscurity great sheaves of shadows tremble. Now and then a convulsion takes place. The murmur becomes a tumult, in the same way as the wave grows to a billow. The horizon—a confused mass of billows, ceaselessly oscillating—murmurs a continual bass; sudden outbursts break through strangely; one imagines that one hears hydras sneezing; cold blasts blow, followed by hot blasts. The trepidation of the sea betokens fear, which anticipates everything. Uneasiness, anguish. Profound terror of the waters. Suddenly the tempest comes, like a beast, to drink of the ocean; a monstrous draught; the water rises to the invisible mouth, an air-hole is formed; the swelling increases; this is a waterspout; the Prester of the ancients, stalactite above,

stalagmite below, a whirling double inverted cone; one point balanced upon the other; the kiss of two mountains, a mountain of foam ascending and a mountain of cloud descending; a frightful union of the wave with the shadow. The waterspout, like the pillar referred to in the Bible, is dark by day and luminous by night. Even thunder is silent in the presence of the waterspout, as if afraid of it.

The vast commotion of these solitudes ascends in a scale, a terrible crescendo, formed by the blow, the gust, the squall, the storm, the hurricane, the tempest, the waterspout, the seven chords of the lyre of the winds, the seven notes of the abyss. The sky is a vast expanse, the sea is a round surface; a breath passes over them, and they have vanished; everything is turned into fury and confusion.

Such are these inhospitable realms.

The winds rush, fly, swoop down, subside, begin afresh, hover above, whistle, roar, laugh; they are frenzied, wanton, unruly, taking their ease on the irascible waste. These howlings have a harmony of their own. They make the whole heavens sonorous. They blow into the cloud as into a brass instrument; they place their mouths to the infinite space with the mingled voices of clarions, bass-trombones, typhoons, bugles, and trumpets—a sort of Promethean brass band. He who

hears them is listening to Pan. Their harmonies are frightful. They greatly enjoy the sombre tones. They beat the solitary places in search of ships unceasingly, day and night, in all seasons, at the tropics as well as at the poles; and while blowing their distracting trumpets through the medley of cloud and wave, they follow the great black hunt of shipwrecks. They are the masters of the hounds. They amuse themselves by making these dogs bark at the rocks and the billows. They gather together the clouds and disperse them again. They knead the yielding water as with a million hands. The water is supple, because it cannot be compressed. It glides away under pressure. Borne down on one side, it escapes on the other. It is thus that the water forms into waves. The wave is a sign of its freedom.

III.

EXPLANATION OF THE NOISE HEARD BY GILLIATT

The great descent of the winds upon the earth takes place at the equinoxes. At these times the balance of the tropics and the poles oscillates, and the vast atmospheric tide pours its flood upon one hemisphere and its ebb upon the other. The constellations which announce these phenomena are Libra and Aquarius.

It is the time for tempests.

The sea silently awaits their coming.

Sometimes the sky has an unpropitious appearance. It is lurid and obscured by a dark veil. Mariners gaze with anxiety at the angry look of the clouds.

But most of all they fear its contented aspect. A smiling equinoctial sky is the storm showing a velvet paw. It was under skies like these that the Tower of Weeping Women in Amsterdam became filled with women scanning the horizon.

When the vernal or autumnal equinox is

late, it is because it is gathering greater force, because it is holding itself in check in order to make greater ravages.

Beware of arrearages. Ango used to say that the sea is a good paymaster.

When the delay is unusually long, the sea betokens her impatience only by a deeper calm, but the magnetic intensity manifests itself by what might be called the illumination of the water. Fire issues from the wave. The air becomes electric; the water, phosphorescent. Sailors feel languid. This is a particularly dangerous time for ironclads; their iron hulls are then liable to produce unusual variations of the compass, leading them to their destruction. The transatlantic steamer *Iowa* perished from this cause.

To those who are familiar with the sea its aspect at these times is peculiar. It seems as though it both desires and fears the cyclone. Certain marriages, though in other respects strongly urged by nature, are received in this manner. The rutty lioness flees before the lion. The sea also is trembling with passion.

The immense marriage is about to take place.

This marriage, like the weddings of the ancient emperors, is celebrated by executions. It is a *fête* seasoned with disasters.

Meanwhile, from the depths, from the open

sea, from the most distant latitudes, from the lurid horizon of the watery waste, from the depths of the boundless expanse, come the winds.

Listen! this is the real equinoctial storm.

A tempest is the conspiring of all the elements to work destruction. Ancient mythology caught glimpses of these indistinct personalities mingled with the great expanse of nature. Æolos plots with Boreas. The alliance of the elements is a necessity. They share the task among them. Impetus must be given to the wave, to the cloud, and to the air, and night is a necessary auxiliary. Compasses must be made to deviate, beacons must be extinguished, lighthouses veiled, stars hidden. The sea must lend her aid. Every storm is preceded by a murmur. Behind the horizon there is a preliminary murmuring among the tempests.

It is this which is heard in the dim distance above the frightened silence of the sea.

It was this significant whispering which Gilliatt had heard. The phosphorescence of the sea had been the first warning, and the murmuring sound, the second.

If the demon Legion exists, he can certainly be none other than the Wind.

The wind is composite, but the air is a unity.

Hence it follows that every storm is com-

plex, which is a necessary result of the unity of the air. The entire deep participates in a tempest. The whole ocean takes part in a squall. All its forces are put into line and take their respective parts. A wave is the deep tossed on high. To contend with a storm is to encounter all the forces of the entire sea and sky.

Messier, the naval authority, the thoughtful astronomer of the little lodge at Cluny, said: "The wind comes from every quarter and penetrates everything." He did not believe that winds were held in check, even in inland seas. According to his views, there was no such thing as winds confined to the Mediterranean. He said that he recognized them in their journeyings. He affirmed that on a certain day, at a certain hour, the Fohn of Lake Constance, the ancient Favonius of Lucretius, had crossed the horizon of Paris; on such and such a day the Bora of the Adriatic; another day the whirling Notus, which is said to surround the circle of the Cyclades. He was able to recognize their characteristics. He believed it possible for the south wind which blows between Malta and Tunis, and the south wind which blows between Corsica and the Balearic Isles, to escape their bounds. He would not admit that the winds were caged like bears. He said: "All the rain comes

from the tropics and all the lightning from the poles." The wind, in fact, becomes saturated with electricity at the intersection of the colures, which marks the extremities of the axis, and with water at the equator, bringing moisture from the equatorial line, and the electric fluid from the poles.

The wind is everywhere present.

This, of course, does not mean that windy zones do not exist. Nothing is more plainly demonstrated than the existence of these waves of continuous currents.

Aërial navigation by means of air-ships, which, from a predilection for the Greek, we call "aëroscaphes," will some day utilize these principal currents. It is an incontestable fact that the wind travels in channels through the atmosphere; there are rivers of wind, rivulets of wind, and brooks of wind, although their branches of air are formed in a directly opposite manner from those of water; for in the air it is the brooks which flow from the streams and the streams which flow from the rivers, instead of flowing into them; hence the result is dispersion, the reverse of concentration.

It is this dispersion which produces the united action of the winds and the unity of the atmosphere. When one molecule is displaced it displaces another, and so the whole wind is put in motion.

To these deep-seated causes for amalgamation add the irregular surface of the globe, piercing the atmosphere with its mountains, contorting and diverting the winds from their course, and fully determining the path of counter-currents which radiate in every direction.

The phenomenon of the wind is occasioned by the oscillation of the two oceans, one on the other; the ocean of air, placed upon the ocean of water, rests upon this unsteady base, and is convulsed with this vast agitation.

The indivisible cannot be divided into sections. There is no partition between one wave and another. The Isles of La Manche are influenced by the Cape of Good Hope. Universal navigation contends against a unique monster. The whole sea is the same Hydra. The waves cover the sea as with an armor of fish-scales. The ocean is Keto. (Phorkys and Keto, parents of the three Grææ, Deino, Pephredo, and Enyo; their names signify respectively "alarm," "dread," and "horror.")

Upon that unity descends the incalculable.

IV.

TURBA, TURMA

(The Crowd, the Swarm)

According to the compass, there are thirty-two winds, that is to say, thirty-two points; but these divisions may be indefinitely subdivided. The wind cannot be classified according to its different courses, because they are incalculable; nor by its varieties, for they are infinite.

Homer himself would have shrunk from attempting to enumerate them.

The polar current encounters the tropical current. Heat and cold are thus combined; equilibrium is maintained by the shock, which results in the swaying of the winds, swollen, torn, and scattered in all directions in wild currents. The dispersion of the blasts tosses the boundless air to the four corners of the horizon.

Winds from all quarters blow there; the wind from the gulf-stream, which blows so much fog over Newfoundland; the wind of Peru, a region of the silent sky where thunder has never been heard; the wind of Nova Scotia, where flies the great auk (*Alca im-*

pennis), with striped beak; the whirlwinds of Ferro, in the China seas; the wind of Mozambique, which damages the pangays and junks; the electric wind of Japan, whose approach is announced by the beating of a gong; the African wind, which blows between Table Mountain and the Devil's Peak, where it is liberated; the winds of the equator, which pass above the trade-winds, describing a parabola, the summit of which points always toward the west; the Plutonian wind, which issues from craters, and which is the dreaded breath of the flame; the strange wind peculiar to the volcano, Awa, which always causes an olive-colored cloud to rise toward the north; the monsoon of Java, against which the casemates called "hurricane houses" are constructed; the branching north wind which the English call "Bush-wind;" the winding gales of the Straits of Malacca, observed by Horsburgh; the powerful southwest wind, called Pampero in Chile, and Rebojo in Buenos Ayres, which carries the huge condor out to sea and saves him from the pit in which the savage, lying on his back and concealed under the hide of a bullock, newly slain, bends his huge bow with his feet, and watches for the bird; the chemical wind, which, according to Lemery, produces thunderbolts in the cloud; the harmattan, of the Caffres; the polar

snow-driver, which harnesses itself to the ice-floes, and propels the eternal icebergs; the wind of the Bay of Bengal, which flows as far north as Nijni-Novogorod, penetrating the triangle of wooded sheds in which the fair of Asia is held; the wind of the Cordilleras, agitator of the great waves and the huge forests; the wind of the Australian Archipelago, where the hunters for honey dislodge the hives of wild bees which are hidden under the axillæ of the branches of the giant eucalyptus; the sirocco, the mistral, the hurricane, the dry winds, the penetrating winds, the flood winds, the torrid winds, those which scatter the dust of the plains of Brazil upon the streets of Genoa; those which obey the diurnal rotation, and those which blow in opposition to it, and which caused Herrera to say: "*Malo viento torna contra el sol*" (Evil comes from turning away from the sun); those which go in pairs, conspiring together for mischief, the one undoing the work of the other; and those old winds which assailed Christopher Columbus on the coast of Veragua; and those which for forty days—from the 21st of October to the 28th of November, 1520—delayed Magellan and rendered his approach to the Pacific very doubtful; and those which dismasted the *Armada* and blew against Philip II. There are still others; indeed,

how can we ever reach the end? The winds, for instance, which carry toads and grasshoppers and drive swarms of living creatures across the ocean; those which cause the "veering of the wind," and whose function is to complete shipwrecks; those which at a single blast shift the cargo of a vessel and compel her to continue her course leaning over to one side; the winds which form the circum-cumuli; the winds which construct the circum-strati; the dark, heavy winds saturated with rain; the winds of the hail-storms; the fever winds; those whose approach sets the mud-eruptions and the sulphur springs of Calabria boiling; those which give a glistening appearance to the hair of the African panthers prowling in the brushwood of Cape Ferro; those which are shaken from the cloud like the tongue of a three-fanged serpent; the terrible forked lightning; and those which bring black snow. Such is the array of the winds.

At the moment Gilliatt was constructing his breakwater, the Douvres rock echoed the distant rushing of these winds.

We have just said, the Wind, that is, all the winds.

The whole horde of winds was approaching.

On the one hand, this array.

On the other, Gilliatt.

V.

GILLIATT HAS HIS CHOICE

The mysterious forces had chosen their time well.

If such a thing as chance exists, it is skilful.

While the sloop had been anchored in l'Homme creek, while the engine had remained boxed in the wreck, Gilliatt's position had been impregnable. The sloop had been safe, the engine protected ; the Douvres, which held the engine, had condemned it to slow destruction, but also protected it from unexpected attacks. In any event, one resource was left him. If the engine were destroyed, Gilliatt would remain uninjured. He could save himself in the sloop.

But to wait until the sloop was removed from her anchorage, where she was inaccessible ; to let her be entangled in the defile of the Douvres ; to wait patiently until she also would be caught by the rock ; to permit him to effect the salvage, the lowering and final transferring

of the engine; to do no damage to the marvelous construction by which it was all placed in the sloop; to consent to this success, therein lay the snare. There could now be perceived a sort of sinister feature, the sombre ruse prepared by the depth of the abyss.

At this time the machine, the sloop, and Gilliatt were all within the defile of the rocks. They formed but one group. A single effort brought to bear on one point would have resulted in the sloop being crushed against the rocks, the engine going to the bottom, and Gilliatt being drowned. Everything could have been destroyed at once, at the same moment, without the dispersing of forces; everything could have been crushed with one blow.

No situation could have been more critical than that in which Gilliatt was now placed.

The possible sphinx which, imaginative minds suppose, dwells in the uttermost depths of darkness seemed to propound a dilemma to him.

Should he remain or depart?

To leave was madness; to remain, fearful to contemplate.

VI.

THE COMBAT

Gilliatt climbed upon the Great Douvre.

From this position he surveyed the vast expanse of ocean.

The view toward the west was peculiar. A wall was rising from it. A great wall of cloud barred the expanse from side to side and was slowly ascending from the horizon toward the zenith. This wall, rectilinear, vertical, without a crevice in its entire height, without a rent in its outline, seemed as square as though laid out by rule and line. This cloud resembled granite. It side wall was completely perpendicular at its southern extremity, but inclined a little toward the north, like a bent piece of sheet-iron, presenting the uncertain slipperiness of an inclined plane. This wall of fog became larger without its top ceasing even a moment to be parallel to the horizon, which had become almost indistinguishable in the gathering darkness. This aërial wall silently ascended as one mass. No undulation,

no wrinkle, not even a projection changed its shape or moved its place. This compact mass in movement was appalling. The sun, palely shining from behind an indescribably sickly looking transparency, illuminated this apocalyptic outline. Even now the cloud had overspread almost half the sky. One would have pronounced it the frightful slope of the abyss. It somewhat resembled the rising of a mountain of shadow between the earth and the sky.

It was night asserting itself in broad daylight.

The heat in the air resembled that from a stove. A moisture like that from a vapor bath emanated from this mysterious mass. The sky, which had changed from blue to white, had turned from white to gray. It resembled a huge piece of slate. The sea beneath, dull and leaden, seemed like another enormous slate. There was not a breath, not a wave, not even a sound. As far as the eye could reach stretched the desert ocean. No sail could be seen in any direction. The birds had taken refuge. One felt the treason in the air.

This dark cloud grew insensibly larger.

The moving mountain of mist, which was directing its course toward the Douvres, was one of those clouds which might be called the

clouds of combat. Sinister clouds. Through these dark masses it is impossible to tell what creature is looking at one askance.

Its approach was terrible.

Gilliatt scrutinized the cloud intently, and muttered between his teeth: "I am thirsty, and you will furnish me with water to drink."

For some moments he stood there, motionless, with his eyes fixed on the cloud. One would have said that he was taking the measure of the tempest.

His red cap was in his jacket pocket; he now took it out and put it on his head. He then removed his reserve of clothing from the hole in which he had slept so long, put on his leggings and his tarpaulin coat, like a knight donning his armor before going to battle. As I have remarked, he no longer had any shoes, but his bare feet had become hardened to the rocks.

Being dressed to combat the elements, he scanned his breakwaters, grasped his knotted rope, quickly descended to the plateau of the Douvres, stood on the rocks at their base, and ran to his storehouse. A few moments later he was at work. The strokes of his hammer were heard by that huge silent cloud. What was Gilliatt doing? With the remainder of the nails, ropes, and beams he was constructing a second breakwater at the eastern entrance, about ten or twelve feet behind the first.

The silence was still unbroken. Even the blades of grass in the crevices of the rock did not stir.

Suddenly, the sun disappeared. Gilliatt looked up.

The rising cloud had just reached the sun. It was as though the day were suddenly extinguished, followed by a blended and pallid reflection.

The bank of cloud had changed its aspect. It no longer preserved its unity. On reaching the zenith it had contracted horizontally, whence it spread over the entire sky. It now had its strata. The formation of the tempest was sketched there as in a section of a trench. The layers of rain and the layers of hail could be distinguished. There was no lightning, only a horrible, diffused glare; for the feeling of horror may be aroused by light. The indistinct breathing of the storm could be heard. This silence trembled confusedly. Gilliatt, who was also silent, watched these blocks of mist grouping themselves overhead and forming into various clouds. A band of ash-colored mist rested heavily and extended still further along the horizon; in the zenith there was another band of lead-color; these pale fragments of clouds hung from the clouds above and met the mist beneath. The entire background, which was composed of the bank

of clouds, was lurid, milky, earth-color, and indescribably dismal. A thin, whitish, transverse cloud, which had come from some unknown quarter, cut the high, gloomy wall obliquely from north to south. One of the ends of this cloud trailed on the sea. At the point where it touched the tossing waves a feeling of suffocation was felt in the darkness, due to this red vapor. Beneath the long, pale cloud small clouds, floating very low, and quite black, were flying in opposite directions from each other as though they did not know what course to pursue. The mighty cloud in the background grew in every direction at once, increasing the eclipse and continuing to spread its gloomy pall. Only a patch of clear sky was left in the east, behind Gilliatt, and even that was about to close. Without perceiving any wind, a strange shower of gray down passed, scattered in small bits, as if some gigantic bird had just been stripped of its plumage behind this bank of darkness. A black, compact roof had formed, which touched the sea at the extreme horizon and blended there with the night. Something was felt to be approaching —something vast, and heavy, and wild. The darkness grew denser. Suddenly, a fearful clap of thunder was heard.

Gilliatt himself felt the shock. There is thought in thunder. There is something ter-

rifying in this brutal reality in the visionary region. It sounds like the fall of an article of furniture in the chamber of giants.

No electric flash accompanied the report. It was dark thunder. Silence was restored. There was a sort of interval, as when combatants place themselves in position. Then huge, shapeless flashes of lightning slowly made their appearance, one after the other. These flashes were unaccompanied by thunder. There was no rumbling. At each flash everything was illuminated. The bank of clouds was now a cavern. It was perforated with vaults and arches. Outlines of forms could be traced there. Monstrous heads were sketched there, whose necks seemed to stretch forward; elephants carrying houdahs came and went. A column of mist, straight, round, and black, surrounded by a white vapor, looked like the chimney of a huge, submerged steamer hissing and smoking beneath the waves. Sheets of cloud undulated. It seemed as though one were looking at the folds of a flag. In the centre, beneath the crimson fog, was buried a nucleus of mist, motionless, inert, and impenetrable to electric sparks,—a kind of hideous fœtus within the tempest.

Gilliatt suddenly felt a breeze stirring. Three or four large splashes of rain fell on the rock about him. Then there was a

second clap of thunder. The wind was rising.

The terror of darkness was at its height; the first clap of thunder stirred the sea, the second rent the wall of cloud from top to bottom; an opening was made; all the water which had been suspended in the cloud poured from this side; the crevice became an open mouth full of rain, and the tempest commenced to vomit forth.

This was a terrible moment.

Down-pour, hurricane, lightning, thunder, waves swirling upward to the clouds, foam, detonations, writhings, cries, harsh noises, whistlings—all at the same time. An unchaining of monsters.

The wind blew from the thunderbolts. The rain did not fall; it came down in torrents.

For a poor man, imprisoned as Gilliatt was, with a loaded boat, in a defile between two rocks in the open sea, there could not be a more threatening moment. The danger from the tide, over which Gilliatt had triumphed, was nothing compared to the danger from the tempest. The situation may be thus described:

Gilliatt, surrounded on every side by precipices, displayed, at the last moment and in the midst of the greatest peril, a skilful strategy. He had even taken his base of operations within the enemy's lines; he had associated

himself with the rock; the Douvres rock, formerly his adversary, was now his second in this immense duel. Gilliatt had conquered it. Out of this sepulchre he had made his fortress. He had fortified himself in that formidable dwelling of the sea. He was held there, but at the same time he was protected. He was, so to speak, leaning his back against the rock, and standing face to face with the tempest. He had barricaded the passage, that highway of the waves. It was, in fact, the only thing to do. It seems as though the tyrannical ocean can, in its turn, be brought to reason by the means of barricades. The sloop might be considered secure on three sides. Closely wedged between the two interior walls of the rock, fastened by three anchors, it was sheltered on the north by the Little Douvre, on the south by the Great Douvre—savage cliffs more accustomed to cause shipwrecks than to prevent them. It was protected on the west by the frame of timbers fastened and nailed to the rocks, a tide-barrier which had withstood the flood-tide of the sea, a veritable citadel gate, having for its side supports the cliff of the rock itself, the two Douvres. Nothing was to be feared on that side. The danger was from the east.

On the east there was no other protection than the breakwaters. A breakwater is an

apparatus for breaking the force of the water. It must consist of at least two open-work frames. Gilliatt had only had time to construct one. He was building the second in the midst of the tempest itself.

Fortunately, the wind came from the northwest. The sea makes mistakes. This wind, which is the ancient "Galerno," had but little effect upon the Douvres rock. It assailed the rock diagonally, and did not drive the waves against either of the two entrances to the defile, so that, instead of entering the passage, it dashed against the cliffs. The storm had planned its onslaught badly.

But the attacks of the winds are shifting, and a sudden change might be expected. If it should veer to the east before this second open-work of the breakwater could be completed, the peril would be great. The defile in the rock would then be invaded by the tempest, and all would be lost.

The frenzy of the storm still continued to increase. The whole tempest is made up of blow after blow. Therein lies its power, also its weakness. Its fury gives an opportunity for intelligence to control it, and man defends himself; but amid what difficulties! There is nothing more monstrous. It gives no respite, no intermission, no truce, no time to

take a breath. There is an indescribable cowardice in the prodigality of its inexhaustible resources. It seems as though the lungs of infinite space were blowing.

All the tumult of the wide expanse rushed upon the Douvres rock. Numberless voices were heard. Who could be shrieking thus? The ancient panic of terror was there. At times it seemed to speak as if someone was giving a command. Then came clamors, clarions, strange trepidations, and the great majestic roar called by the sailors the "roll-call of the ocean." The indefinite and fleeing eddies of wind whistled as they convulsed the sea; the waves became disks beneath these eddies, and were dashed against the breakwaters like giant quoits thrown by invisible athletes. The enormous surf streamed over all the rocks. Torrents fell upon them from above, and the surf bathed them from beneath. Then the roaring increased. No uproar of man or beast can give an idea of the tumult occasioned by these movements of the sea. The cloud cannonaded, the hailstones fired grape-shot, the surges leaped on high. At certain points the wind seemed motionless, at others it blew a hundred and twenty feet a second. As far as eye could reach, the sea was white; ten leagues of soapy water filled the horizon. Doors of fire opened. Some

clouds looked as though they had been burned by others, and, floating above the heap of red clouds, which resembled burning coals, they looked like smoke. Floating forms jostled each other and blended together, each changing the shape of the other. An immeasurable quantity of rain poured down; volley firing was heard in the firmament. In the midst of the dark roof there was a sort of overturned basket from which fell, in great confusion, the waterspout, hail, clouds, purple fire, phosphoric gleams, darkness, light, thunder,—so formidable are all these outpourings of the sky!

Gilliatt seemed to pay no attention to this. His head was bent over his work. The second breakwater was nearly completed. To each clap of thunder he replied by a blow of his hammer. This cadence could be heard in the midst of this chaos. He was bareheaded. A gust had carried off his red cap.

He suffered from a burning thirst. Probably he had a fever. Pools of rain had formed in the hollows of the rocks around him. From time to time he took a little water in the hollow of his hand and drank. Then, without even looking around to observe the storm, he resumed his work.

All might depend upon a single moment. He knew what fate awaited him if he did not

complete his breakwater in time. Why lose a moment in looking at the approaching face of death?

This turmoil around him was like a boiling cauldron; there was uproar and bluster. At times it seemed as though the thunder were descending a stairway. The electric flame incessantly struck the same points of rock, which were probably veined with diorite. Hailstones fell, as large as one's fist. Gilliatt was obliged to shake the folds of his jacket. Even his pockets were full of hail.

The storm now came from the west, and beat against the barricades of the two Douvres; but Gilliatt placed confidence in this breakwater, and with reason. This barrier, made of the large portion of the fore-part of the Durande, did not offer too great a resistance to the shock of the waves. Elasticity is a sort of resistance. The calculations of Stephenson establish the fact that against the waves, which are themselves elastic, a mass of timbers, of given dimension, joined and chained together in a certain manner, makes a better barrier than a breakwater of masonry. The barriers of the Douvres fulfilled these conditions, besides which they were so ingeniously fastened that the waves, striking against them, were like hammers driving in the nails, and fastening them more firmly and solidly in the rock;

in order to demolish them it would have been necessary to overthrow the Douvres. In fact, the gale only succeeded in sending a few jets of foam beyond the breakwater to the sloop. On this side, thanks to the barrier, the tempest was baffled, and only the foam penetrated beyond. Gilliatt turned his back upon the scene. He tranquilly heard the useless rage of the storm behind him.

The flakes of foam flying on every side resembled wool. The vast and angry waters deluged the rocks, rose above them, and raged within, penetrated the network of interior fissures, and emerged again from the granite masses by narrow orifices, inexhaustible mouths, which sent forth peaceful little fountains in the midst of this deluge. Here and there threads of silver fell gracefully from these orifices into the sea.

The second frame, which was to reinforce the eastern barrier, was nearly completed. A few more knots of rope and ends of chain, and the time was approaching when this barrier in its turn would be able to contend with the storm.

Suddenly, there was a great light; the rain ceased, the clouds dispersed; the wind had just shifted; a sort of high, dim window opened in the zenith, and the lightning was extinguished; one might have thought this the end. It was the beginning.

The wind had veered from southwest to northeast.

The tempest was about to begin afresh, with a new legion of hurricanes. The north wind was now going to make a violent assault. Sailors call this dreaded return "*la rafale de la renverse*" (the return storm). Wind from the south contains more rain, and wind from the north, more thunder.

The attack, coming now from the east, was directed against the weakest point.

This time Gilliatt stopped his work and looked around him.

He stood erect, on a point of overhanging rock behind the second barrier, now almost finished. If the first hurdle of the breakwater should be carried away it would break down the second, which was not yet consolidated, and in this demolition would crush Gilliatt. At the place which he had just chosen, he would, in that case, have been killed before seeing the sloop, the engine, and all his work swallowed up in this engulfment.

Such was the contingency. Gilliatt accepted it, and, terrible to contemplate, wished that it might happen.

In this wreck of all his hope he desired to die first—to die first, because the engine seemed to him like a living being. With his left hand he moved aside his hair, which hung over his

eyes, matted by the rain, seized his good hammer with a firm grasp, leaned backward in a menacing attitude, and waited.

He was not kept waiting long.

A clap of thunder gave the signal, the pale opening in the zenith closed, a torrent of rain fell, everything became dark again, lightning was the only light. The dark attack recommenced.

A powerful wave, visible amid flash after flash of lightning, rose on the east beyond l'Homme rock. It resembled a large roll of glass, and was of a greenish hue and frameless, and stretched across the whole sea. It advanced toward the breakwaters. As it approached it increased in size; it was an indescribable, large cylinder of darkness rolling on the ocean. Thunder rumbled indistinctly.

This wave, on reaching l'Homme rock, broke in two and passed on. The two ends, rejoined, formed but one mountain of water, which, instead of being parallel to the breakwaters, rose perpendicularly. The wave was shaped like a beam.

This battering-ram flung itself against the breakwaters. The shock produced a roaring noise. Everything was hidden in the foam.

Unless one has seen them, one cannot imagine these snowy avalanches which the sea sends forth and under which it engulfs rocks

more than a hundred feet high—such, for example, as the Great Anderlo in Guernsey and the Pinnacle at Jersey. At Sainte Marie of Madagascar it leaped over the point of Tintingua.

For some moments everything was hidden by the overwhelming ocean. Nothing was visible except the furious accumulation of waters, a great amount of spray, which resembled the whiteness of a winding-sheet blowing in the draught of a sepulchre, a mingling of noise and storm beneath which devastation was at work.

When the foam subsided, Gilliatt was still standing.

The barrier had remained firm. Not a chain had been broken, not even a nail displaced. Under this test the barrier had displayed two qualities requisite for breakwaters —it had been as yielding as a hurdle and as firm as a wall. The surf beating against it had dissolved into rain.

A stream of foam gliding along the zigzag of the defile subsided as it passed under the sloop.

The man who had put this curb upon the ocean took no rest.

The storm fortunately turned aside for a time. Its fury returned to vent itself on the cliffs of the rock. This was a respite, and Gilliatt profited by it to complete the inner breakwater.

He spent all the rest of the day at this work. The storm continued to beat against the side of the rock with mournful solemnity. The urn of water and the urn of fire in the clouds poured forth continuously without being exhausted. The undulations of the wind above and below resembled the movements of a dragon.

The change to night could scarcely be perceived, because it had been so very dark.

However, the darkness was not complete. Tempests illuminated and blinded by lightning have intervals of being visible and invisible. Everything is illuminated, then all grows dark. One sees spectres appearing and disappearing in the deep gloom.

A phosphoric zone, tinged with the blush of the aurora borealis, floated like a fringe of spectral flame behind the dense clouds. This shed a wan light, illuminating the rain-drifts.

These lights aided Gilliatt and directed him in his work. Once he turned around and said to the lightning, "Hold the candle for me."

By the help of this light he was able to raise the rear barrier even higher than the front barrier. The breakwaters were now almost complete. As Gilliatt was engaged in fastening the last cable to the top beam, the north wind blew directly in his face. This

compelled him to turn his head. The wind had suddenly shifted toward the northeast. The assault upon the eastern entrance began again. Gilliatt looked out upon the open sea. The breakwaters were once more about to be attacked. Another great ocean wave was approaching.

This was roughly repulsed; it was followed by a second, then by another, and another, five or six in confusion almost at the same time; then, at last, a frightful one.

This one, which was an accumulation of forces, bore a singular resemblance to a living being. In that swelling and in that transparency it would not have been difficult to imagine the shapes of gills and fins. It flattened itself out and was crushed against the breakwater. Its form, almost like that of an animal, then rebounded against it, which somewhat resembled the tremendous crashing of a hydra on this block of rock. As the wave receded it carried destruction in its path. The water seemed to cling and bite. A great shudder ran through the rock. A roar like that of beasts was mingled with it. The foam resembled the saliva of a leviathan.

When the foam subsided, the damage could be seen. The last onslaught had worked destruction. This time the breakwaters had suffered. A long and heavy beam had been torn

from the front barrier and thrown over the back barrier, upon the overhanging rock, which, but a moment ago, Gilliatt had chosen as his post of combat. Fortunately, he had not returned. Had he been there he would have been instantly killed.

A remarkable peculiarity in the fall of this beam was, that in preventing the timber from rebounding it had saved Gilliatt from the consequences of a rebound and counter-blows. It even proved useful to him in another way, as will be seen.

Between the projecting rocks and the interior walls of the defile, there was a space, a large opening somewhat like the notch made by an ax, or the split of a wedge. One of the extremities of the timber was hurled into the air by the waves, and had, in falling, become lodged in this opening, enlarging the gap.

An idea occurred to Gilliatt.

It was to bear down on the other extremity.

The beam, which was lodged by one end in the crevice of the rock which it had enlarged, projected from it as straight as an outstretched arm. This sort of arm stretched parallel with the interior wall of the defile, and the free end of the beam was about eighteen or twenty inches from this point of support. A good distance for the effort which was to be made.

Gilliatt fastened his feet, knees, and fists in

the rocky cliff and leaned back, pressing his two shoulders against this enormous lever. The beam was long, which increased its power. The rock was already loosened, but he was obliged to renew his efforts four times. As much perspiration as rain rolled off his hair. The fourth attempt was tremendous. A cracking took place in the rock, the opening was prolonged into a fissure which gaped like a jaw, and the heavy mass fell into the narrow passage of the defile with a terrible noise—an answer to the claps of the thunder.

It fell straight, if that expression is correct —that is to say, without breaking.

Imagine a cromlech precipitated in one piece.

The beam which had served as a lever descended with the rock, and when everything was giving way beneath him at once, Gilliatt himself narrowly escaped falling.

The bottom, at this point was very full of boulders, and there was but little water. With a splash of foam which reached Gilliatt, the monolith landed between the two great parallel rocks of the defile and formed a transverse wall—a sort of hyphen between the two rocks. Its two extremities touched the rock, and, as it was a little too long, the summit of the cliff, which was of friable rock, was crushed as it plunged downward. The result of this fall

was a singular cove, which may still be seen. The water behind this barrier of stone is almost always quiet.

This rampart was still more invincible than the section of the forepart of the Durande, which was wedged between the two Douvres.

This barrier came opportunely.

The sea continued its attacks. The waves are always determined to overcome an obstacle. The first barrier, having been injured, was beginning to go to pieces. One single breach in a breakwater causes grave disaster. The enlarging of the hole is an inevitable consequence, and there is no means of repairing it, because the waves would carry off the workman.

An electric discharge, which illuminated the rock, showed Gilliatt the injury which was being done to the breakwater, the beams thrown down, the ends of rope and pieces of chain beginning to swing in the wind, and a rent in the centre of the structure. The second breakwater was intact.

Though the block of stone, so powerfully thrown by Gilliatt into the defile behind the breakwater, was the best sort of barrier, it had one fault—it was too low. The waves, striking against it, could not break it, but they could leap over it.

It would be useless to think of raising it

higher. Masses of rock alone could be placed on top of this barrier of stone; but how could they be detached and moved? how raised or placed in position? how fastened there? Timber structures may be added to, but not those composed of rocks.

Gilliatt was not Enceladus.

The lack of height in this small isthmus of granite troubled him.

This defect was not long in making itself felt. The gusts increased their attack upon the breakwater; they did more than rage; it seemed as though they devoted themselves to destroying these barriers. A sort of tramping could be heard upon that much shaken framework.

Suddenly, a piece of binding-streak, detached from this dislocated barrier, leaped beyond the second hurdle and flew over the transverse rock down into the defile, where the water seized it and carried it into the windings of the passage. Gilliatt lost sight of it there. It seemed probable that the fragment of beam would strike the sloop. Fortunately, in the interior of the rock the water, enclosed on all sides, scarcely felt the tumult without. There was but little swell, and therefore the shock could not be very severe. Besides which Gilliatt had no time to think of this disaster, if it might be called a disaster, as

every kind of danger presented itself at once; the tempest concentrated itself upon the vulnerable point, destruction was imminent.

For a moment the darkness was intense; the lightning ceased—a sinister connivance; the cloud and the sea were one; there came a dull thud.

This crash was followed by a terrible commotion.

Gilliatt thrust forward his head. The hurdle which formed the front of the barrier was broken in. The ends of the beams could be seen leaping in the billows. The sea used the first breakwater to beat and injure the second.

Gilliatt felt as a general who sees his vanguard driven in.

The second barrier of beams resisted the shock. The rear armament was strongly bound and buttressed. But the broken hurdle was heavy; it was at the mercy of the waves, which dashed it forward and backward; the ligatures which remained prevented it from falling apart, and kept it its original size, and the qualities which Gilliatt had imparted to it as a means of defence resulted in making it an effective weapon of destruction. From a shield it had been converted into a club. Moreover, the breaks stood conspicuously prominent, ends of timber projected in every direction, and it looked as though cov-

ered with teeth and spikes. No blunt weapon could be more formidable and more readily handled by the tempest.

It was the projectile and the sea was the catapult.

The blows succeeded each other with a sort of tragic regularity. Gilliatt, standing thoughtfully behind this entrance which he had barricaded, listened to the knocks of death as it was trying to force an entrance.

He bitterly reflected that, had it not been for that smoke-stack of the Durande, so fatally detained in the wreck, he would at this very moment have been at Guernsey and in port, with the boat in security and the engine saved.

What he had feared had taken place. The destruction was complete. It was like a death-rattle. All the timber-work of the breakwaters at once, the double apparatus, crushing confusedly together, approached in a whirl of foam and dashed against the stone barrier like chaos upon a mountain, and stopped there. Nothing remained but a heap, a shapeless mass of beams, penetrated by the waves, which were still grinding them to pieces. This conquered rampart struggled nobly against destruction. The sea had shattered it; it broke the force of the sea. Though overthrown, it remained, to some

extent, effective. The rock which barred its passage, an obstacle impossible to withdraw, held it fast. The defile was, as we have said, very narrow at this point; the victorious whirlwind had driven forward and mingled and heaped up the wreck of the breakwater in this narrow pass. The very violence of the blow, by heaping up the mass, and ramming the broken ends into each other, had converted this ruin into a solid heap. Its use was destroyed, and yet it remained firm. Only a few pieces of wood had broken loose. These the waves had scattered. One passed through the air quite close to Gilliatt. He felt the wind from its motion blow on his forehead.

However, some waves—those large waves which return with imperturbable regularity in tempests—leaped over the ruins of the breakwater. They fell into the defile, and, notwithstanding the windings of the passage, they raised the level of the sea there. The water in the passage began to move ominously. The mysterious kiss which the waves gave the rocks became more accentuated.

How could this agitation be prevented from penetrating as far as the sloop?

Little time is required by these gusts to cause a storm in the windings of the pass, and a few heavy seas would stave in the sloop and let the engine drop.

Gilliatt meditated and shuddered.

But he was not disconcerted. No defeat was possible for this brave spirit.

The hurricane had now found the joint, and was plunging frantically between the two walls of the passage.

Suddenly, at some distance behind Gilliatt, a crash more dreadful than any he had yet heard resounded along the defile.

It came from the direction of the sloop.

Some dreadful disaster was taking place there.

Gilliatt hastened toward it.

From the eastern entrance, where he stood, he could not see the sloop, on account of the windings of the defile.

At the last turn he halted, and waited for a flash of lightning.

The lightning flashed and revealed the situation to him.

The rush of sea through the eastern entrance had been met by a blast of wind from the western entrance. This indicated that a disaster was about to take place.

The sloop had received no visible injury; fastened as it was, it was but little exposed; but the body of the Durande was in danger.

This wreck presented a large front to the tempest. It was entirely out of the water, suspended in the air ready to be destroyed.

The hole which Gilliatt had made in it, in order to take out the engine, had completed the weakening of the hull. The keelson had been snapped. The backbone of this skeleton had been broken.

The hurricane had blown against it.

Nothing more was needed. The planking of the deck had bent like an open book. The dismemberment had taken place. It was the sound of this crash which reached Gilliatt's ears through the hurricane.

What he beheld as he approached appeared almost irremediable.

The square opening which he had made had become a wound. In this cut the wind had made a break. This transverse fracture separated the wreck in two. The after-part, near to the sloop, had remained solidly embedded in the rocks. The forward part, that which was opposite to Gilliatt, hung loose. A fracture, as long as it holds, is a hinge.

This mass oscillated on its broken edges, as though on hinges, and the wind rocked it with a formidable noise.

Fortunately, the sloop was no longer beneath it.

But this rocking loosened the other half of the hull, which still remained wedged and motionless between the two Douvres. It is but a step from loosening to breaking loose.

With the persistence of the wind, the dislocated portion might suddenly drag down the other part, which almost touched the sloop, and all, both the sloop and the engine, would he engulfed in this overthrow.

Gilliatt saw all this before his eyes.

It was a catastrophe.

How could it be averted?

Gilliatt was one of those who turn even danger itself to their assistance. He reflected a moment.

He went to his arsenal and took his ax.

The hammer had served him well; it was now the turn of the ax to do likewise.

Then Gilliatt mounted the wreck. He stood on the part of the planking which had not given way, and, leaning over the precipice of the defile between the Douvres, he began to cut away the torn beams and everything which remained attached to the broken hull.

The operation consisted in completing the separation of the two fragments of the wreck, in freeing the half which remained firm, in throwing into the water the part which the wind had seized, and, in fact, continuing the work of the tempest. It was more perilous than difficult. The hanging portion of the hull, dragged down by the wind and by its own weight, now adhered only at a few points. The

whole wreck resembled a diptych, one leaf of which, half open, would flap against the other. Five or six pieces of the framework only, bent and splintered, but not broken, still held together. Their fractures creaked and grew larger at each vibration of the gale, and the hatchet had, as it were, only to aid the wind. The few points of connection, which contributed to the facility of this work, also added to its danger. Everything might give way at once beneath Gilliatt.

The storm reached its height. The tempest had thus far only been terrible; it now became horrible. The convulsion of the sea reached the heavens. Hitherto the storm had been supreme; it seemed to do as it chose, it gave the command, it drove the waves to madness, preserving, at the same time, an indescribably sinister lucidity. Below, the storm was furious; overhead, it was raging. The sky is the breath, the ocean is only the foam. Hence the power of the wind. The hurricane represents genius. In the meanwhile the intoxication of its own horror had confused it. Now it had become a mere whirlwind. It was blindness giving birth to night. There is a moment of frenzy in storms, a sort of delirium of the sky. The heavens no longer know what they are doing. They dart lightnings blindly. Nothing could be more

frightful. It is a fearful hour. The trembling of the rock was at its height. Every storm has a mysterious course; at this instant it changes it. This is the dangerous moment in a tempest. At this instant, "the wind," said Thomas Fuller, "is a raving maniac." It is at this moment in tempests that the continuous discharge of electricity takes place, which Piddington calls the "cascade of lightning." It is at this instant that there appears in the blackest part of the cloud, we cannot tell why, unless it be to spy the universal terror, that circle of blue light which the Spanish mariners call "*el ojo de tempestad*" (the eye of the tempest). This lugubrious eye rested upon Gilliatt.

He, on his part, watched the clouds. Now he raised his head. After each blow of the ax he stood erect, with defiant air. He was, or seemed to be, too near destruction to be insensible to pride. Did he despair? No. Before the supreme fury of the ocean he was as prudent as he was bold. He placed his feet only on the firm parts of the wreck. He risked his life, and yet was careful. As for him, he also was at his supreme moment. His strength had increased tenfold. His daring had made him desperate. Each blow of his ax sounded like a challenge. He seemed to have gained in directness of aim what the

tempest had lost. A pathetic struggle. Inexhaustible on one side, and indefatigable on the other. It was a struggle as to which could compel the other to let go. The terrible clouds, modeled after the immense dimensions of the masks of the Gorgons, produced every possible form of intimidation; the rain came from the waves, the foam from the clouds, the phantoms of the wind bent down, meteors grew crimson and then vanished, leaving the darkness more dense after their disappearance; there was nothing now but one down-pour, coming from all quarters at once; everything was in a state of ebullition; the mass of shadow descended; the cumuli charged with hail were ragged and ash-colored, and appeared to be seized with a whirling frenzy; a sound was in the air like dried peas rattling in a sieve; the inverse currents of electricity observed by Volta darted their fulminating flashes from cloud to cloud; the prolongation of the thunder was terrible; the flashes of lightning approached Gilliatt. He seemed to astonish the heavens. He came and went on the shaking Durande, causing its deck to tremble beneath his step, striking, hewing, cutting, ax in hand, pallid in the lightning, with hair disheveled, barefooted, in rags, his face covered with the foam of the sea, which was great in this maelstrom of thunders.

Adroitness alone can contend against the delirium of forces. Adroitness was Gilliatt's talent. He desired the simultaneous fall of all the dislocated fragments. For this purpose he weakened the hanging fractures without wholly severing them, leaving some fibres which sustained the rest. Suddenly, he stopped, holding his ax aloft. The operation was complete. The entire piece detached itself.

This half of the body of the wreck sank between the two Douvres, below Gilliatt, who stood erect on the other half, leaning forward and watching. It plunged perpendicularly into the water, splashing the rocks, and stopped before touching the bottom of the defile. Enough of the Durande remained above the water to be more than twelve feet above the waves; the vertical planking made a wall between the two Douvres; like the rock thrown across a little higher up in the defile, it allowed only a little foam to filter through its two extremities; and this was the fifth barricade improvised by Gilliatt against the tempest in this passage of the sea.

The blind hurricane had assisted in this last breakwater.

It was fortunate that the contraction of the inner sides of the passage had prevented this barrier from falling to the bottom. This left

it more height; besides, the water could pass beneath the obstacle, which diminished the force of the waves. That which passes beneath cannot pass above. Therein lies, in part, the secret of floating breakwaters.

Henceforth, whatever the clouds might do, there was nothing to fear for the sloop and the engine. The waves surrounding them could no longer be agitated. Between the enclosure of the Douvres which covered them on the west, and the new barrier which protected them on the east, no attack from either sea or wind could reach them.

Gilliatt had snatched safety from catastrophe. The clouds, in fact, had assisted him.

This done, he took a little water, from one of the pools formed by the rain, in the hollow of his hand, drank, and said to the clouds, "Pitcher!"

It is an ironical joy for combating intelligence to prove the vast stupidity of furious forces, by at last making them of use, and Gilliatt felt the immemorial necessity of insulting his enemy, which dates back to Homer's heroes.

Gilliatt descended into the sloop and took advantage of the lightning to examine it.

It was time that succor should be rendered to the poor boat; it had been very much shaken during the preceding hour, and was

commencing to give way. In this summary glance Gilliatt did not notice any injury. Nevertheless, it was certain that it had endured violent shocks. The water once calmed, the hull had righted itself, the anchors had remained firm; as for the engine, its four chains had supported it admirably.

As Gilliatt was finishing this inspection something white passed before his eyes and vanished in the gloom. It was a sea-gull.

No apparition could be more welcome in a storm. When the birds appear it signifies that the storm is subsiding.

Another excellent sign was that the thunder increased.

The violent efforts of the storm had broken its force. All sailors know that the last burst is rough but short. The excess of thunder announces the end.

The rain stopped suddenly. There remained only a dull rumbling in the clouds. The storm ceased as quickly as a plank falls to the earth.

That is to say, it broke. The immense mass of clouds went to pieces.

A strip of clear sky issued from the darkness. Gilliatt was astonished, it was broad daylight.

The tempest had lasted nearly twenty hours.

The wind, which had brought it, carried it

away again. Fragments of darkness were diffused over the horizon. The broken and flying mists grouped themselves in tumultuous confusion from one end to the other of the line of clouds, there was a retreating movement, a long diminishing muttering could be heard, a few last drops of rain fell, and all that gloom full of thunder departed like a horde of terrible chariots.

Suddenly, the sky became blue.

Gilliatt perceived that he was tired. Sleep descends upon the weary like a bird of prey. He allowed himself to relax and drop down in the sloop without choosing a place, and fell asleep. He remained there for several hours stretched out and inert, scarcely distinguishable from the beams and rafters among which he was lying.

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